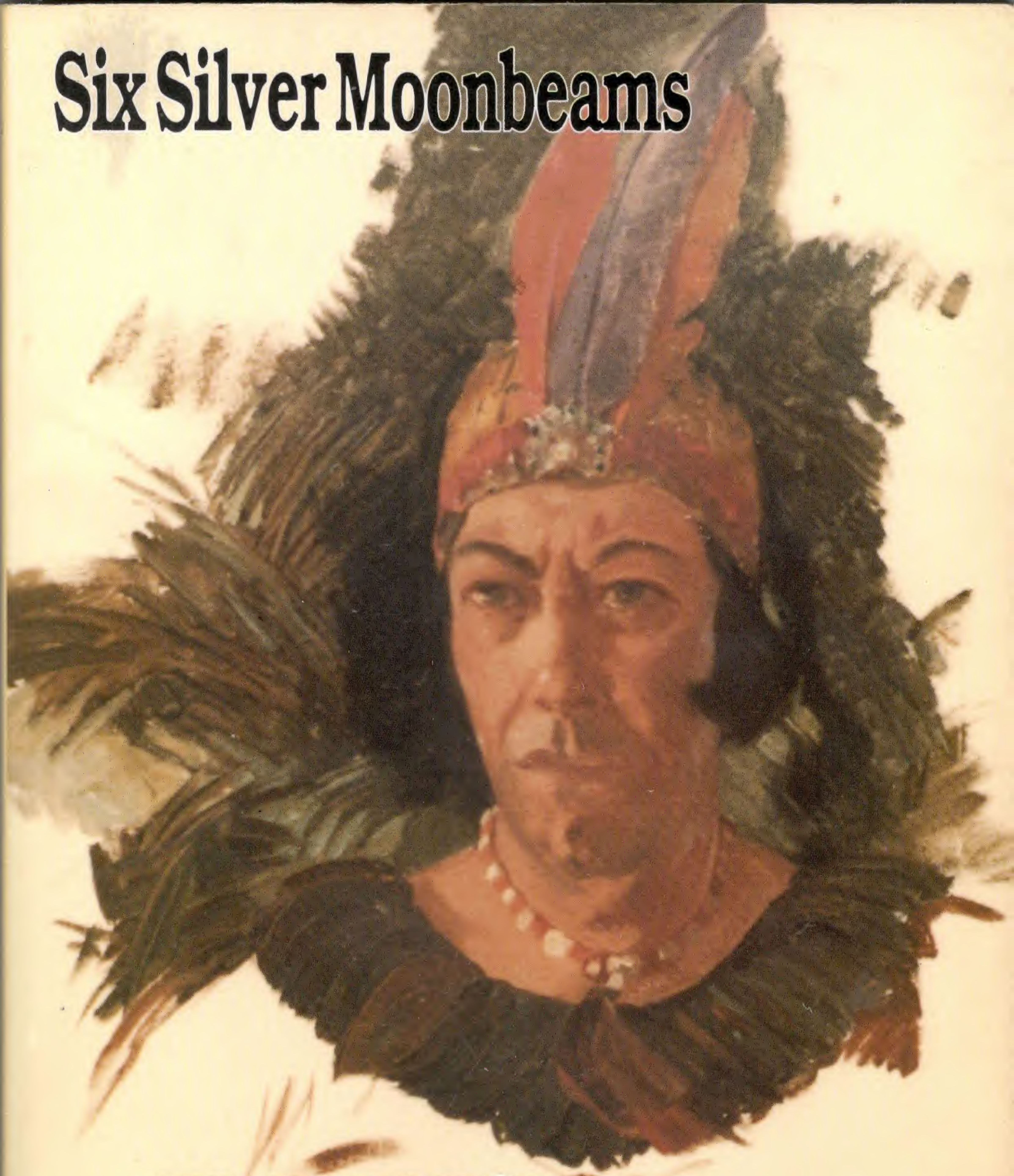


# Six Silver Moonbeams



*THE LIFE AND TIMES*  
*of*  
*AGUSTÍN BARRIOS MANGORÉ*

Para mi querido amigo  
MANGORÉ  
Este libro es un  
- MUY BUEN -  
CON TODO MI ADMIRACION Y  
TODAS LAS  
FELICIDADES  
3.1932

by Richard D. Stover



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Dedicated to Lois and Dwight,

who have *always* been there.



# Acknowledgements

I first heard the name Barrios Mangoré in 1962 when I was an exchange student to Costa Rica in the American Field Service Program. This book is the culmination of investigation I began in 1974 while an undergraduate at the University of California at Santa Cruz. After initial field research in Central America and Mexico, I was somewhat amazed by the fact that I had discovered something of great importance for the guitar—the legacy of a genius who died forgotten and whose life and work had somehow become intertwined with mine as if almost by destiny.

Over the years many people have helped with information, materials, support and encouragement. First, a special thank you to Juan de Dios Trejos in Costa Rica. Also to Sila Godoy of Paraguay for all his work in preserving the legacy of Barrios. Likewise, a sincere thank you to Ronoel Simoes of Sao Paulo for all his contributions and support, particularly in locating the phonograph recordings of Barrios.

Throughout Latin America many people kindly aided me in my research: Dr. Rafael Antonio Carballo, José Cándido Morales, Cortés Andrino, René Andrino, Rubén Urquilla and Carlos Payet (El Salvador); Raimundo Barrera and family (Mexico); Julia Martinez de Rodriguez, Dinora Bolandi, Dr. Edgar Cabezas and family and Dr. Juan Cabezas and family (Costa Rica); Lalyta and Lila Almirón, Eduardo Falú, Jorge Labanca, Victor Villadongos and Lucio Nuñez (Argentina); Bacon Duarte Prado, Jacinto Mateaiuda, Zuni Salomoni, Margarita Pellegrini de Infanzón and Dr. Gaspar Aguero (Paraguay); Pedro Duval and Norma Nacsa (Brazil); Toby Feder and Agustín Carlevaro (Uruguay); and Bartolomé Diaz (Venezuela).

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...And most of all, thanks to my parents Lois and Dwight Stover.





Al insigne

Barrios Mangoré  
Su admirador.

Raul Santana M

Cercof 27-III-32



The function of the artist is to communicate  
that moment in one's life  
when one first felt one's heart unfold.

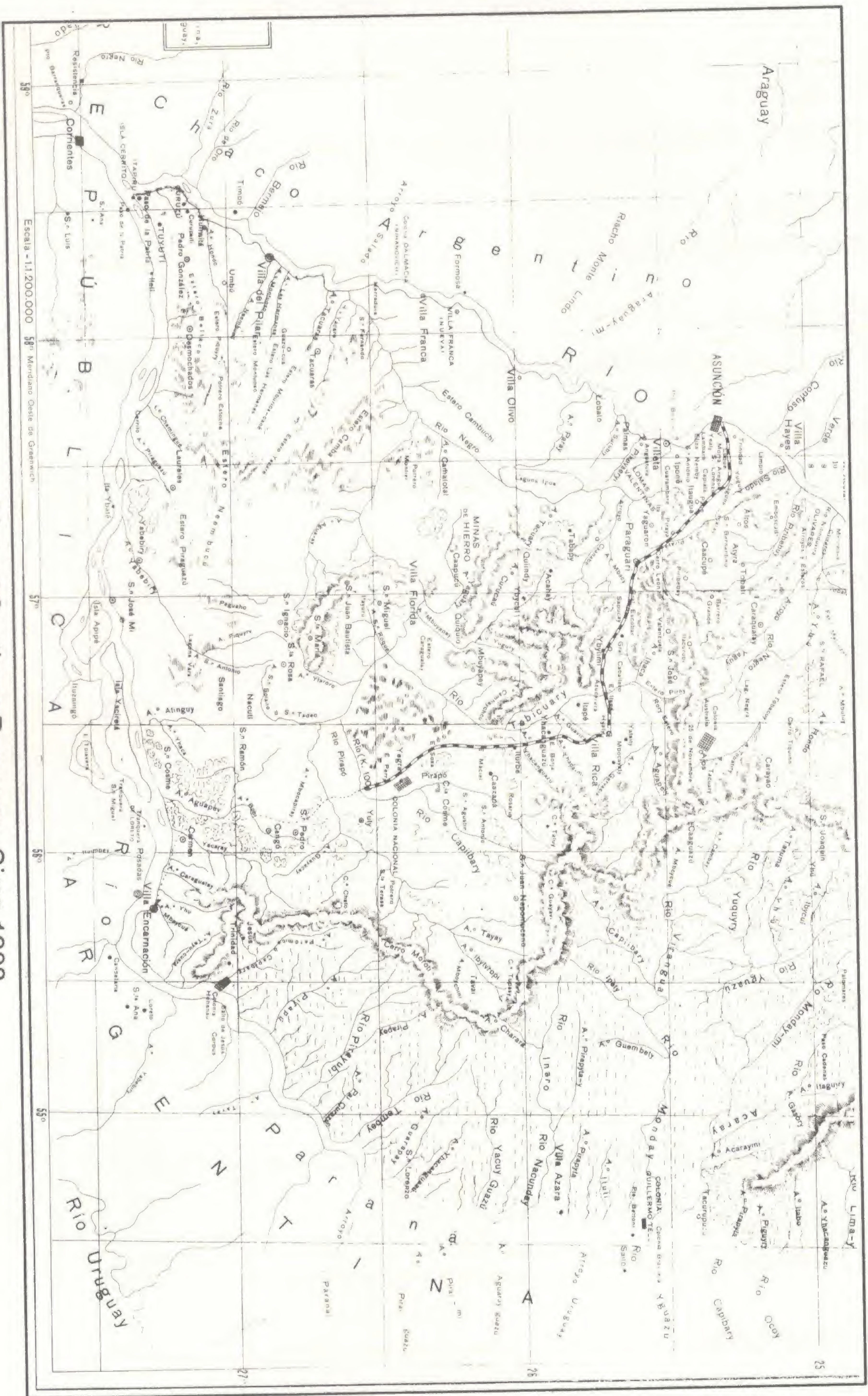
*Albert Camus*



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Map of Southern Paraguay, Circa 1908



## CHAPTER 1:

# YOUTH IN PARAGUAY

Southern Paraguay. Green, flat, expansive... a tableland dotted with palm trees, ideal for raising livestock and growing crops. A quiet and peaceful atmosphere dominates this verdant landscape. It has always been this way, long before Europeans began inhabiting this land during the 17th century.

The town of San Juan Bautista in the Misiones district began centuries ago as a crossroads point during the era of ox-drawn carts. Officially recognized as a municipality in 1893 (when Agustín Pío Barrios was 8 years old), it is still a simple little town with the majority of its streets unpaved. The central plaza, with its church on the west side, is a picture of tranquility. In this plaza park, where today not one but two monuments to his memory can be seen, young Agustín played with his friends doing all those things that boys do.

Agustín's father, Don Doroteo Barrios, was born in Corrientes, Argentina in 1849. His mother, Doña Martina Ferreira, was a native of Humaitá, Paraguay.<sup>1</sup> Seven sons were born to this couple:<sup>2</sup> Rómulo (b. 1874), Hector (b. 1875), Virgilio (b. 1876), José (b. 1881), Agustín (b. 1885), Diodoro (b. 1888 ), and Martín (b. 1895).

Doroteo held the position of Argentine vice consul in the Misiones district. Doña Martina was a school teacher who loved literature and particularly the theatre. Both were educated people, and their appreciation of the cultural arts—literature, drama and music—was considerable. Culture was a basic and valued commodity in the Barrios home. Don Doroteo had an extensive library, one of the most complete in the relatively isolated area of Misiones.

Doroteo played the guitar. With his brothers Pedro and Cornelio, who played respectively the ravel (violin) and flute, a musical trio was formed that played for fiestas and special occasions. Doroteo was obviously a "folk" guitarist who played typical *rasgueado* strums supplying rhythm for popular songs and dance tunes of the day such as the *polca*, *vals*, *zamba*,—to mention the most well-known. By watching and listening to his father, Agustín learned the rudiments of chords and rhythmic accompaniments.



and the guitar was the principal medium through which he developed his natural gifts. Doroteo procured for him a small guitar from which the youth "drew forth extraordinary sounds" that delighted all his friends. He was also familiar with the ubiquitous harp, the principal folkloric instrument of Paraguay. There were no guitar teachers or music schools available. Social gatherings were the only experiences that young Barrios had with music in those early years.

A local guitar player, one "Pilo" Rojas, was probably the only exposure Barrios had to the guitar, outside of his father. Agustín was also reputedly a talented whistler. In the family the harp, guitar, flute, ravel and cornet were played by the children forming a "small orchestra".<sup>3</sup>

At thirteen years of age he could play little melodies and interpreted a few printed musical compositions: *La Perezosa* and *La Chinita* of the Argentine composer/guitarist Juan Alais as well as music by Fernando Carulli. He reputedly had composed at least one original composition by this time (a mazurka in A major known by reference only). These published compositions were introduced to young Barrios by the man who was one of the most influential people in his life: Gustavo Sosa Escalada (1877-1943), an Argentine-born Paraguayan who played classical guitar and had studied formally in Buenos Aires with Carlos García Tolsa (1858-1905), Juan Alais (1844-1914) and Antonio Ferreyro.

Sosa Escalada had returned to Paraguay after spending his youth in Buenos Aires. Record of his first public performance in Paraguay comes from 1895 where he participated in a concert in Asunción. He was involved with the *Instituto Paraguayo* ("Paraguayan Institute"), a private school founded in 1895 in Asunción which offered a varied curriculum including literature, drama, painting, languages, music, gymnastics and fencing. He taught classic guitar for this school during two different periods: 1897-98 and 1908-09. He utilized the guitar methods of Fernando Sor, Dionisio Aguado and Fernando Carulli, and was familiar with most 19th century pre-Tárrega guitar methods. A major project he had planned (but which went unrealized) was to write a comparative method for classic guitar utilizing eight methods: Aguado, Sor, Sor-Coste, Carcassi, Antonio Cano, Federico Cano, Tomás Damas and Antonio Jimenez Manjón. Teaching guitar was but one of several professions Sosa Escalada had in his life. He worked in the exportation business, with products such as cattle, wood and yerba maté tea. He also wrote technical, scientific articles for numerous newspapers in Asunción. He composed music for guitar<sup>4</sup> and wrote a book that was published in 1936 titled *The Phantom Ship* (a chronicle of events relating to the 1904 political revolution in Paraguay). He taught mathematics at the National Military School and the Normal Schools. His friendship with Hector Barrios led to his spending some vacation time in San Juan





Barrios and his schoolmates in San Juan Bautista circa 1895. Agustín is on the far right holding the drum.





Gustavo Sosa Escalada, Barrios' only guitar teacher.

ics at the National Military School and the Normal Schools. His friendship with Hector Barrios led to his spending some vacation time in San Juan Bautista in December 1898. It was during his stay in the Barrios home when he first heard Agustín play the guitar. Impressed with the boy's talent, he immediately began giving him lessons. He advised Doroteo and Martina to send the youth to Asunción as soon as possible to continue his education and study of music and the guitar.

Many years later, in the Guatemalan newspaper *El Liberal Progresista*, September 15, 1933, recollecting his first meeting with Sosa Escalada, Barrios declared:

I was a little indian of my tribe there in the Jesuit missions of Paraguay. I was 13 years old. I had started strumming the guitar when I was 7 years old just for fun, imitating my father who played the guitar regularly. I studied then with the mission fathers who taught me how to read and write. I felt ecstatic listening to the priest who played melodies on the organ at different hours: in the mornings, liturgies, in the afternoons, at the hour of the *ángelus* — diffusing into my soul, giving me a pleasant feeling of well-being.



“You will be a musician”, the organist-priest told me, seeing my rapture. “You have all the indications of such.”

One day there arrived to the village of San Juan Bautista, where I was, Gustavo Sosa Escalada, son of the Paraguayan Ambassador to Argentina in Buenos Aires. He was a “schooled guitarist”. I listened to him play and great was my surprise in discovering that the “pampa instrument” that I played with such joy (but which I never realized possessed such great resources) contained such marvelous possibilities. Enthusiastically I played... I played with all my heart and put all of my *guaraní* soul into that performance.

Sosa Escalada listened to me and openly expressed his astonishment. A short time later I went with him to Asunción to attend high school. I continued to study the guitar, but already there had awakened in my soul a great confidence in the resources of my race, speaking through the strings of my guitar. One year later I gave concerts in the capital.

Such was my revelation and thus was born the confidence in the artistic power of my race...

At the time Barrios made these statements he was at the height of what I call his “Nitsuga Mangoré Period” (1930-1934) in which he presented himself to the public as the “Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay” — a kind of “indigenous *Guaraní* virtuoso” who appeared bare chested complete with headdress and feathers. What he divulges in this interview is a mixture of fact and fiction. It is reasonable to infer that Sosa Escalada was indeed surprised and pleased at having discovered young Barrios. Also we can surmise that Doroteo Barrios did play the guitar frequently and that Agustín began strumming the guitar around the age of seven, imitating his father. His claim that he appeared in concert in 1899 in Asunción has not been substantiated. As to the truth of the assertion that in San Juan Bautista in those years there was a Jesuit priest who played the organ and declared to Barrios that he would “become a musician” — this is quite suspect, being a fabrication to suit his purposes at the time, as is the assertion that he was educated by Jesuit priests. It has been claimed that in San Juan Bautista in those times there did not exist even one piano, let alone an organ, and it is a known fact that there were no Jesuit fathers functioning as teachers in Paraguay during the 19th century.

Author Saturnino F. Perez, in his book *Agustín Barrios — Su Entorno, su Epoca y su Drama* claims that Agustín was not born in San Juan Bautista but rather in Villa Florida some 36 kilometers to the north. Perez states that on March 5, 1885, a government decree established a new girls school in





The Barrios family home in San Juan Bautista as it looks today.

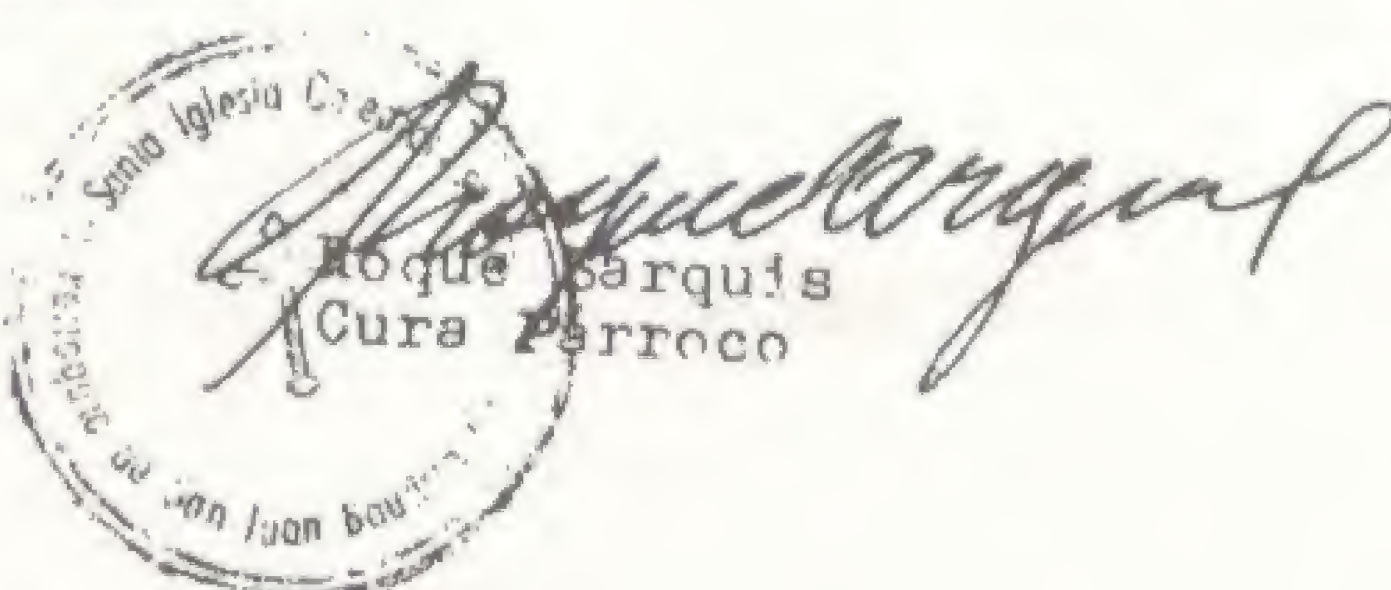
Villa Florida and that Doña Martina was named preceptor of this school. Villa Florida, located on the Tebicuary River, was the main shipping point from that region of southern Paraguay for all livestock and agricultural products being sent downriver to the Rio de la Plata. Obviously, Doroteo, in his capacity as Argentine vice-consul, spent a good deal of time there. Doña Martina started working in her new post 7 months pregnant with Agustín. One might infer that she was in Villa Florida some 2 months later when the child was born May 5. This may be the case. However, no direct proof is offered by Perez other than the claim that the child was named in memory of a good friend, Don Agustín Corrales, who had resided in Villa Florida.

Every other source of information regarding Barrios' birthplace states that he was born in San Juan Bautista. After March 1885 both Doroteo and Martina spent a good deal of time in Villa Florida. But their roots were in San Juan Bautista. Doroteo had solicited the newly formed municipality of San Juan Bautista to cede him legal title to the "dos fracciones" ("two sections") of municipal land upon which he had built the family home, and according to Municipal Act No. 31 of September 18, 1893, he was unsuc-



cessful. But he tried again several years later in 1900 and was granted his request.<sup>6</sup> This home still stands today at the corner of República Argentina and Presidente Franco (which was called 14 de Mayo in Doroteo's time).

It seems rather doubtful that Martina would have remained in Villa Florida to give birth. She would have done what most women of the day did: return home to have the child born in safe, sanitary and familiar conditions. The baptismal record states that on May 23, 1885, in San

SANTA IGLESIA CATEDRAL		
Y PARROQUIA DE		
SAN JUAN BAPTISTA DE LAS MISIONES		San Juan Bautista de las Misiones, 5 de Mayo de 1967.
No. _____		
<p>CERTIFICO que en la página 48 del Libro II de Bautismos de esta Parroquia se halla inscripta la partida de Bautismo de AGUSTIN PIO BARRIOS, nacido el 5 de Mayo de 1885, hijo legítimo de don Doroteo Barrios y de doña Martina Ferreira. Fué bautizado el 26 de Mayo de 1885 por el Rvdo. Padre Nicolás Pésole, siendo padrino don Ceferino Leguizamón.</p>		
		

### Baptismal Certificate

Ignacio de las Misiones (the principal town in Misiones and seat of the diocese, 30 kilometers south), Agustín was baptized. Padre Nicolás Pésole did the honors, and above is given the text of the entry on record. It does not state where the child was born.

Perez offers as further indirect corroboration of his claim a request made by Doña Martina to the government in 1886 to allow her to absent herself from her job as preceptor of the school in Villa Florida in order to "leave the country" (no doubt to visit Corrientes, Argentina), thus underscoring the fact that taking a leave of absence from one's employment was no trifling matter, requiring formal solicitation and approval. However, leaving the country for an extended period, as opposed to returning home for a few days to give birth, are two different situations. It seems conceivable that she would have needed only a few days off to return home to give birth and did not make a formal solicitation to do so.



Evidence would thus seem to suggest that the Barrioses maintained two separate homes – the principal family home in San Juan and a “utilitarian” home in Villa Florida. Otherwise, why would Barrios himself claim (in the interview cited above) that in 1898 he was in San Juan Bautista when he met Gustavo Sosa Escalada?

Further proof that the Barrioses maintained their residence in San Juan Bautista comes from a letter sent to the editor of the Asunción newspaper *El Cívico* of January 8, 1898 in which a request is directed to the Minister of the Interior urging that direct mail delivery be expanded to San Juan Bautista and it is signed by numerous residents of San Juan Bautista, among whom figure Doroteo Barrios, his brother Pedro as well as the eldest son Rómulo. If Doroteo had moved his residence exclusively and permanently to Villa Florida one wonders why he would maintain an interest in seeing the mail service to San Juan improved, particularly since Villa Florida did enjoy direct delivery of mail from Asunción at the time. Simply to bolster a public request by his “former” neighbors, the citizens of San Juan Bautista? Highly improbable.

However, in *El Cívico* of December 16, 1903 one reads the announcement of Mr. and Mrs. Hector Barrios departing on the train for Villa Florida. No doubt brother Hector was returning home for the Christmas holidays. Perhaps by 1903 (with only one child still living at home – Martín) Martina and Doroteo had established a more permanent home in Villa Florida. This might explain why Hector would state in the social column of a major newspaper that he was heading for Villa Florida, not San Juan Bautista. Furthermore, Doroteo did die in Villa Florida on May 16, 1907 (at 58 years of age from a cerebral stroke complicated with aneurism). Perez states that Doña Martina “quickly abandoned Villa Florida and moved to Asunción” after her husband’s demise and that she bequeathed her property there to the state so that it could be utilized as the site for a public school. Whether they still owned property in San Juan at the time of Doroteo’s death is not known.

No doubt Agustín spent time in both places. What Misiones lacked in sophistication and opportunities, it made up for with its pristine beauty and tranquility. Young Barrios was fond of racing horses and playing “torero” with local bulls. The story is related by Francisco E. Arrom (one of Barrios’ boyhood friends) about a circus that visited San Juan. So great were the impressions made by the clowns and the acrobats on young Agustín and his friends that they organized their own circus: “When we were students in the fourth year at the local school, a circus came to town, the first we had ever seen. When the circus had ended its run, we all wanted to duplicate it. It would have music, acrobats and clowns. Agustín was in charge of the music, for which he produced a ‘bottle-piano’, whose pitches depended on





Agustín with his older brother José in 1899.



the quantity of water they contained. He was also the acrobat and even played the role of clown with facility. He then brought the harp of his older brother Rómulo, who was a harpist, and a tiny piano his parents had given to him. He played all three with equal facility. None of us thought anything unusual regarding Agustín's multiple personality. To us it just seemed very natural. None of us were more than thirteen years old... "

It is interesting to note that Barrios was fond of physical exercise in the form of acrobatics and gymnastics. He would maintain this habit of physical exercise and gymnastics throughout his life.

At some point in 1899 young Agustín went to Asunción. He lived with his older brothers Hector and Virgilio and studied guitar with Sosa Escalada. He enrolled in the *Colegio Nacional* ("National High School") in early 1901 and the "Book of Final Grades" No. 64, inventory b, page 24 gives his grades for the first year:

#### Grades for Ordinary and Extraordinary Exams

First Year Students

November 1901

Barrios, Agustín P.

#### Distinguished Undeclared Students

Castillian Grammar	10
Latin	10
Practical Arithmetic	10
Universal Geography	7
Median grade	9

Barrios was 15 years old when he started high school (in March 1901) and he did quite well, scoring perfect grades in all subjects save one (grades were given on a 1 to 10 point system). He was about two years older than most of his fellow first-year students.

He continued with his second year at the *Colegio Nacional* as indicated again in the "Book of Grades" on page 52:

#### Grades without Median

November 1902

Barrios, Agustín P.

Castillian Grammar	10
Latin	9
Universal Geography	10
Ancient & Greek History	9
Algebra	7
French	10



His grades this year were listed as “Grades without Median” because evidently, for reasons unknown, he had not completed French, leaving an incomplete at the end of the year (thus making it impossible to arrive at the “average grade median”). However, on page 66 it shows that he subsequently made-up the exam and did receive credit for French scoring an admirable 10.

Luis Campos Cervera, a fellow student and good friend, states that Barrios was a talented artist who many times would draw caricatures of fellow students and teachers while classes were in session. He also confirms that Barrios was an avid reader whose favorite books were *Don Quijote*, *Martín Fierro* and *A Thousand and One Nights* and that he often enjoyed reciting passages from these works to friends.

At this time (1902) Agustín’s younger brother Diodoro had enrolled in the *Colegio Nacional* as a first year student, and his final grades are seen on page 47 of Book 64:

Barrios, Diodoro

Castillian Grammar	4
Latin	1
Practical Arithmetic	4
Universal Geography	10
Median grade	4

Evidently Diodoro liked geography but was not exactly the scholar of the family. His name does not appear for any subsequent year and it is presumed that he was not readmitted. Likewise, after 1902 the name Agustín Pío Barrios does not appear again.

As to why he did not continue his high school education, one can only guess. Unoubtedly by 1903 he had become much more serious and involved with the guitar. Perhaps school was a bit boring alongside the wondrous panorama of creative challenges the classic guitar was revealing to him in this initial phase of the long musical journey he was destined to travel.

In Sosa Escalada’s own words: “Barrios... studied with me all the school of Dionisio Aguado, the complete method of Fernando Sor and all the compositions of Julián Arcas and Carlos García Tolsa.” No doubt during this period a good deal of time was spent studying classic guitar fundamentals and developing his skills. His progress was substantial and constant, and on the last day of the year he made his formal public debut as a guitarist in a concert described in *EL Cívico*, December 30, 1903, informing of a last minute change in the upcoming event:



The announced program published yesterday for the concert that will take place the 31st of this month has suffered a slight change of number due to the continued illness of Señorita María Barbero who was to have performed a vocal selection.

In her place will be featured *Fantasia en Imitación al Piano* by Viñas, a guitar duo by the young Agustín Barrios and Juan de la Cruz Samaniego.

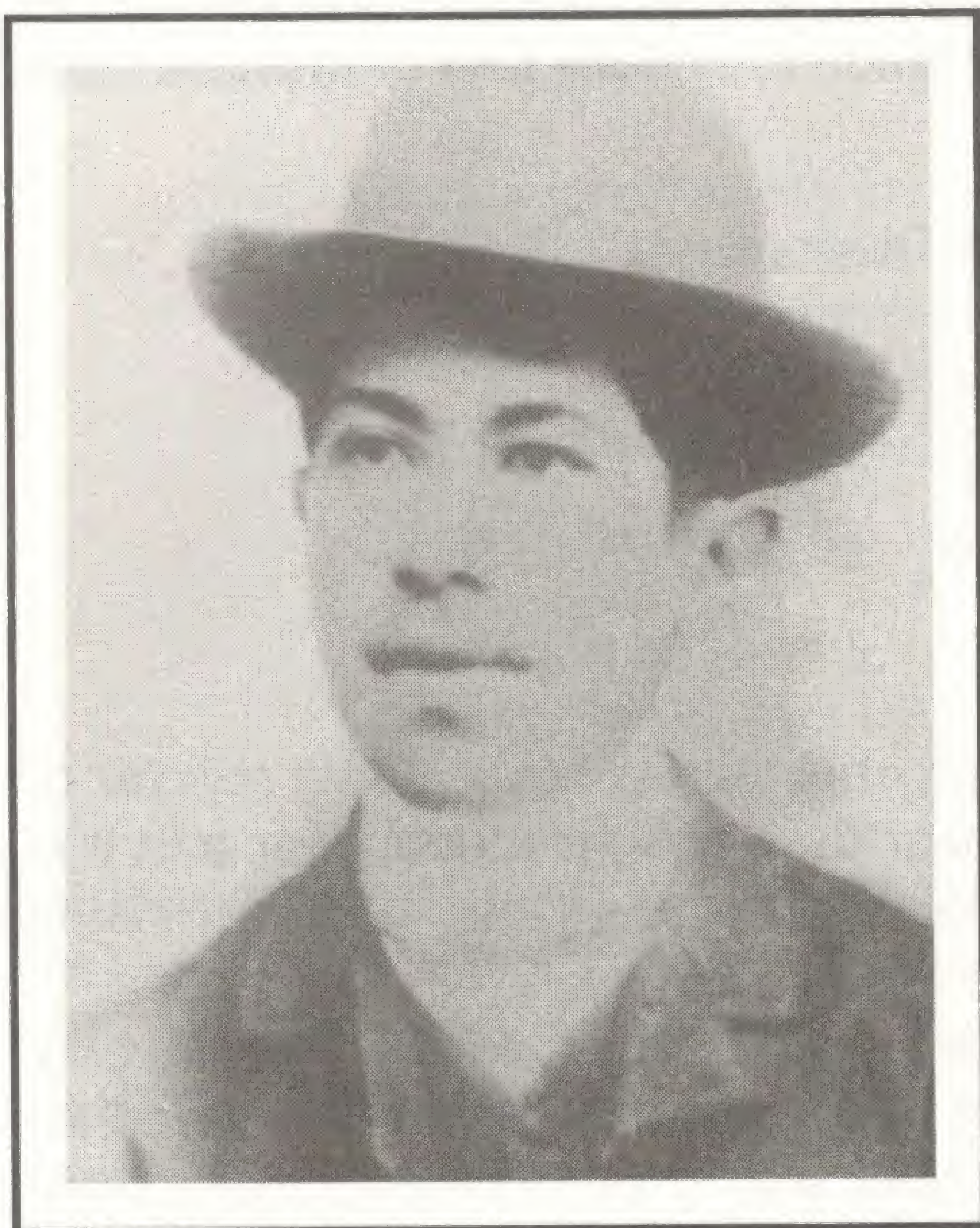
This is the first verifiable public performance of Barrios. Undoubtedly he had played in a variety of settings by this time—familial get togethers, formal parties and special occasions (such as when eldest brother Hector

wed Rosaura Brizuela September 19, 1903). Even though called in as a last minute replacement, his participation in this concert was an important step forward for him as a performing artist—appearing in a formal public event at the National Theatre. By the end of 1903 he had spent one entire year concentrating mainly on the guitar and the study of music in general.

Evidently there were no possibilities for him to earn even a minimal living from the guitar at this time for in 1903 he began a job at the Agricultural Bank as a scribe (his calligraphic skills no doubt being a factor in procuring this employment). This position evidently did not last long. Bordas states that Barrios

tried several jobs during these years: a position in the Office of the Paraguayan Navy; that of an illustrator for the National Department of Engineering; and also as a newspaper reporter, primarily for the Asunción daily *Los Sucesos* (1905).<sup>7</sup> He was evidently not successful at any of these posts. The guitar was the only thing in which he was profoundly interested, and he regularly spent as much as 10 to 12 hours a day practicing.

It was during this time that Barrios met another person destined to leave a mark on his life: Nicolino Pellegrini (1873-1933). Barrios reputedly



Barrios the young man, circa 1903





Nicolino Pellegrini, wearing the uniform of the Police Band, which he directed for many decades in Asunción.

studied the fundamentals of music and composition with this Italian violinist who was perhaps the principal personality in the serious musical society of Asunción circa 1895-1930.

Nicolino Pellegrini was born in Viggiano, Potenza, Italy. He began study of the violin at age 4 in Geneva, Switzerland, and at 9 years he played a concert in Paris where "he pursued his musical studies in the conservatory." In 1886 he traveled to the British West Indies, and by 1888 he found himself in Porto Alegre, Brazil. He came to Asunción in 1893 as a member of a touring company. Settling in Asunción, he began teaching vi-

olin, tuning pianos and organizing concerts. When the Instituto Paraguayo was created in 1895, Pellegrini was made director of its music program. He formed a student orchestra, and was the principle conductor for most of the orchestral concerts of the day.

Pellegrini was a schooled and competent conductor, violinist, cellist, composer and educator.<sup>8</sup> His basic music instruction program for the first year classes of the Instituto Paraguayo is given in the article "Program of Practical Music Theory" (*Revista del Instituto Paraguayo*, Año 1, No. 3, December 1897). Pellegrini lists 12 major areas (with related subjects) that must be mastered by students enrolled in "primer año normal" ("first year"):



1. What is music?
2. Signs used in indicating clef
3. Ways of writing notes on different clefs
4. Note values
5. Rests
6. Accidentals
7. Intervals
8. Modes and scales
9. Key Centers
10. Tempo
11. Syncopations
12. Phrasing, repetition

No doubt those who studied under Maestro Pellegrini received a complete basic musical education. An article published in the *Sunday Guardian*, January 17, 1932, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, states that Barrios "was educated by the Jesuit Fathers until he was 13 years old when he was sent by his father to the National College, in the city of Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. There he remained until he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Science and Letters in 1905. During this period he studied music seriously under an Italian musician, Nicolino Pellegrini."

Again, a mixture of fact and fiction. Had Barrios remained in school, he would have graduated in 1905. But though he dropped out of high school, he obviously did study with Pellegrini at some point during these years (1900-05) either privately or in connection with the Instituto Paraguayo. Under Pellegrini he also studied a bit of the cello and the violin.<sup>9</sup>

The only original musical composition known from this period is the tango-like *Abrí la Puerta Mi China* (which loosely translated means "Open the Door My Country Girl") dated December 25, 1905 (suggesting that the manuscript was written as a Christmas present for someone). This piece is not for beginners, nor is it virtuosic. It does reveal that Barrios was playing the entire range of his instrument at this time (some seven years after Sosa Escalada initiated him into its secrets). It also demonstrates a basic and correct knowledge of harmony and modulation.

What kind of music was Barrios playing at this time? In addition to the above-mentioned original composition, we only know for certain that he played the popular Paraguayan tunes *Campamento Cerro Leon*, *Londón Carapé*, *Guyrá Campana* and *Mamá Kumanda*. Obviously he played other things, most probably some music by Aguado, Sor and García Tolsa. I venture to guess that it was very rare to see any European editions of guitar music in turn of the century Paraguay. Tárrega's music was still not known in South America. The sheet music available to young Barrios came primarily from Sosa Escalada who in all probability purchased it in Buenos Aires



(circa 1880's and 90's) and consisted of music by Napoleon Coste, Juan Alais, Juan Parga, Julián Arcas, Tomás Damas, José Viñas, Antonio Jimenez Manjón and Gaspar Sagreras.

In the Asunción of the early 1900's there were two principal "cultural communities" – the Spanish and the Italian. To the Spanish descended community fell the role of presenting *zarzuelas* and the Italian community sponsored the opera and operetta performances. Professional companies touring the Rio de la Plata regularly visited Asunción theatres. By way of example, typical of the times, from July to October 1903, a *compañía lírica* ("lyric theatrical troupe") under the direction of Francisco P. Barbat, presented several operas – such as *Cavallería Rusticana* of Mascagni, *Carmen* of Bizet and *Tosca* of Puccini – as well as numerous operettas and *zarzuelas*. This company brought 5 principal singers and a chorus of twelve. The orchestra was made up of 12 local "professors" (no doubt Pellegrini being one of them).

While not comparable to Montevideo or Buenos Aires, Asunción did have a functioning musical culture. It was possible to hear the music of practically all the great classical composers as well as light classical and popular music played by the bands of Asunción (of which there were at least three at the turn of the century giving regular public performances – the Military Band, The First Line Band and the Banda Salesiana). Barrios no doubt had a basic exposure to classical music which was enhanced by his relationship with Nicolino Pellegrini.

In *La Patria* of May 7, 1906, the following short announcement appeared in the social column: "The 5th of this month young Agustín Barrios celebrated his birthday, being the object of numerous felicitations." Later that month on May 29 there appeared an article informing of a concert (on June 2) for the benefit of the victims of the Mt. Vesuvius eruption in Italy (which had occurred the previous month on April 7 and 8). This concert consisted of a 20 piece orchestra conducted by Pellegrini, four separate pianists (playing among other things Op. 9 and Op. 22 of Chopin), a mandolinist, a vocalist and Agustín Barrios performing *El Delirio* of Julián Arcas. He was evidently very successful (appearing last on the program) for *Los Sucesos* of June 4 in its review of the concert states "Mr. Agustín Barrios was the object of a true ovation with his Paraguayan airs played marvelously on the guitar." It would seem that he performed not only the formally announced piece by Arcas, but also several other Paraguayan selections which were well received.

Barrios' participation in this concert indicates that he was beginning "to arrive" as a serious artist in the Asunción musical community. Pellegrini clearly had a great deal to do with the organization of this event and including



# Abrí la Puerta Mi China

Agustín Barrios

7/4

C7

C10

C9

C9

C7

C10

C7

C7

C5

C4

C2

FINE

Arm. 12



# Abrí la Puerta Mi China 2

C7 C5 C4 C2

C9

C5 C6 C7

C7 C6 C7

C5 C6 C7

C6

2 C7

Del Φ al § a FINE



Barrios in the line up of artists reveals the esteem and confidence that he had developed in the young guitarist. Bordas refers to the year 1907 as the time when "Barrios began to fly".

Less than two weeks after his 22nd birthday his father Doroteo suddenly died on May 16. This was no doubt very painful and a major emotional shock. Martina moved to Asunción and her welfare was now in the hands of her sons (most of whom resided in Asunción). Undoubtedly life became just a little bit harder after his father's death.

During this time Barrios became part of a group of intellectuals, artists, writers and musicians who met daily at the *Farmacia París*, a pharmacy-store-cafe in downtown Asunción. Carlos Centurión states that "the daily get-togethers of the *Farmacia París* attracted a numerous attendance of spectators and constituted a cultural-artistic activity of great pride for the local citizenry. The bloody scuffle of July 2, 1908 was the final curtain for this congenial scenario." Here the writer is referring to an internal conflict between the *radicales* and the *cívicos*, two warring factions of the then dominant Liberal Party. In Paraguay violence has always been part of politics together with rapid changes of government via military coups. The Liberal Party, which gained control from the Colorado Party in 1904, gave Paraguay its most politically unstable era with a total of 15 changes of government in 18 years of power (1904-1922). The "bloody scuffle" referred to above is but one of many incidents in this period of constant political turmoil.

These *peñas* that took place at the *Farmacia París* no doubt included lively discussions dealing with art, philosophy and politics, as well as performances by musicians and it is assumed that Barrios was a frequent performer. Other guitarists that were part of the group were his good friend Dionisio Basualdo, Ampelio Villalba and Carlos Talavera.

Barrios was evidently not keenly interested in politics. He had by now established a reputation as a professor of guitar. *El Diario* of January 6, 1908, reviewing a concert<sup>10</sup> that took place on January 4, states the following:

Señor Agustín Barrios, extremely well-known professor of guitar, delighted everyone executing a very difficult fantasy of his own composition and in response to the insistent applause that the public offered he played an exceptionally beautiful fantasy on motives from the popular *Santa Fe* and another piece of extreme difficulty with a tango rhythm.

It is important to note that he played his own compositions and that he again was chosen by Pellegrini to participate in a serious concert (which included Pellegrini conducting an orchestra, as well as vocalists, piano, violin and piano/mandolin duo). The manuscript found for *Variations on*



*Santa Fe* seems to be lacking a logical ending (perhaps a last page was lost somewhere along the way?) and is probably not the exact same version Barrios played in this concert. However, it does demonstrate Barrios' progress as a player/composer – it is decidedly more complex than *Abrí la Puerta Mi China* from 3 years prior. Just exactly what was the “very difficult fantasy of his own composition”? Perhaps an early version of *A Mi Madre* (sonatina)?

As concerts were sporadic, Barrios kept busy playing “serenades indefatigably every night” during the years 1905-1909. He was starting to amount to something as a guitarist – an artist to be taken seriously. He was beginning to feel that he had “conquered” Asunción and that he must leave Paraguay to further his career as a concert performer. *El Diario* of February 15, 1908 states:

*With plans to travel abroad soon, (italics mine) the popular artist Señor Agustín Barrios will give on Thursday of next week, in the National Theatre, in collaboration with Señor Gustavo Sosa Escalada, his guitar instructor and an artist of repute in the material, a concert in which will figure excellent musical selections, sure to capture the attention of those persons who attend this attractive festivity.*

Without exaggeration, it can be affirmed that the concert cannot fail to attract to the theatre numerous families and aficionados, since in the program to be presented there figure numbers of great interest, such as the *Marcha Fúnebre* of Thalberg, the *Sonata* of Maestro García, the notable *Delirio* of Arcas and others.

The *Sonata* of Maestro García is by Carlos García Tolsa and the *Funeral March* is by the Austrian pianist Sigismond Thalberg (1812-1871), a contemporary of Liszt, and is probably an arrangement for 2 guitars by Arcas (or perhaps by someone in Buenos Aires).

The concert not only featured Barrios and Sosa Escalada but also an orchestra directed by Nicolino Pellegrini. Perhaps this was viewed as Barrios' “big farewell” concert and Pellegrini had a strong desire to participate. The concert, which finally took place on February 27, 1908, consisted of the following:



- First Part:**
1. Orchestra
  2. Solo by Barrios:  
*Polaca Fantástica* of Julián Arcas
  3. Guitar duo:  
*Cielito Porteño* of G. Sosa Escalada  
performed by Barrios and Sosa Escalada
  4. Orchestra
  5. Guitar duo:  
*Al Fin Solos* sonata in D by Carlos  
García Tolsa.
  6. Guitar duo:  
*Duo Concertante-Aire Nacional* by  
Ciervas with instrumentation by Barrios

- Second Part:**
1. Orchestra
  2. Solo by Sosa Escalada:  
*Un Recuerdo por mi Patria* by Antonio  
Jimenez Manjón
  3. Guitar duo:  
*Florencia* (habanera de salon) by G.  
Sosa Escalada  
*Cielo Santa Fe* arranged by Barrios
  4. Orchestra
  5. Solos by Barrios:  
*Fantasía Imitación al Piano* by José  
Viñas  
*Estudio Number 8* (andante) by  
Dionisio Aguado  
*El Delirio* by Julián Arcas
  6. Orchestra

Nowhere is there listed titles of works the orchestra played. It must have been quite a contrast alternating guitars with small orchestra! The concert was evidently successful as judged from the review that appeared the following day in *El Diario* of February 28:

Last night the guitar concert in the National Theatre organized by señores Agustín Barrios and Gustavo Sosa Escalada took place.

In attendance at the theatre were distinguished families and numerous gentlemen who occupied a large number of seats.

The persons who listened last night received the concert artists with warmth and bid them goodbye with a salvo of enthusiastic applause.



Barrios obtained last night an ovation well deserved as his execution on the instrument of his predilection is simply admirable.

We will not attempt to mention the program in detail, since all the triumph of last evening is one of the first successes of young Barrios who holds the promise for the future of becoming an outstanding artistic figure.

Five months later Barrios performed two duets with Dionisio Basualdo in a concert given in Villa Rica on July 16 in the Club Porvenir featuring orchestra, a trio of piano, violin and flute, piano solo, vocalists and mandolinists. This was a benefit concert for the victims of the aforementioned "bloody scuffle" of July 2. Pellegrini no doubt organized it. Barrios and Basualdo performed a gavotte entitled *Katie and Jessie* (an original by Pellegrini for piano and violin arranged for 2 guitars by Barrios) as well as Sosa Escalada's duet *Cielito Porteño*.

Barrios' talents as a guitarist and musician had matured considerably in the limited cultural environment that Asunción offered. His artistic sketching abilities remained sharp — the pencil drawing of Isabel (shown below) attests to this fact. Drawn on March 3, 1908 in Asunción, it carries the dedicatory: "(From the natural) To my beautiful friend Isabel. A. Barrios" Isabel looks to be a proper young lady and she was indeed beautiful.

That this pencil sketch rendering has survived illustrates the magnanimous unselfishness that was characteristic of Barrios throughout his life: he would give people his creations (be they sketches, poems or music manuscripts). The creative act for Barrios was almost always rooted in an involvement with a particular person: this individual could be someone he admired or even loved (as no doubt the case with Isabel, or the María Ester to whom he dedicated the *Mazurka Apasionata*) someone who was his supporter or patron or someone who truly moved him emotionally, such as the sleeping child that inspired him to improvise *El Sueño de la Muñequita* ("The Sleep of the Little Doll"). I think that Barrios did not perceive of what he created as exclusively "his" and this is born out by the numerous manuscripts (many times an only copy of a particular piece) that he wrote and left with friends during his extensive travels. Perhaps he thought of his art as existing essentially *for* and *because of* other people. Certainly he did not see it primarily as a means to enrich himself and the fact that he died a poor man underscores this assertion.

An episode illustrative of this is related by Barrios' boyhood friend Francisco Arrom who stated that in 1905 "Agustín had begun a relationship with a young lady who was a music student. From open friendship our guitarist soon began making serious overtures declaring his love. The





This pencil drawing, dated March 3, 1908, is the only example of Barrios' considerable talent as a caricaturist and calligrapher. The inscription states: "(From the natural) To my beautiful friend Isabel. A. Barrios"



young lady did not appreciate his efforts and on a certain occasion publicly rebuffed him. Agustín invited me one evening to accompany him as he was going to offer a *serenata* to the young lady. When I expressed my surprise that he would want to serenade the one who had insulted him, he responded 'my guitar will explain everything.' By the light of a street lamp, Agustín, bracing his left foot against the outer wall, launched into a frightening dissonance. The guitar insulted, ridiculed and laughed finishing with an inspired melody that seemed to forgive all. Accustomed to hearing Agustín every week, I had never seen him rise to such heights as that evening, which made me aware of his total and definitive artistic capacity. Upon finishing this musical 'offering' no windows were opened nor did we hear a 'thank you'."

By 1909 Barrios was no doubt eking out a simple existence from teaching and performing. In *La Evolución* of April 28, 1909, appears this announcement of an upcoming concert in Paraguarí (about 50 kilometers southeast of Asunción):

Agustín Barrios

This young artist will give a concert next Saturday in the town of Paraguarí. The military commander Colonel Alejandro Escobar has gallantly offered the use of the spacious salons of the municipality for the concert.

We wish our young friend the most promising triumph.

This supports the fact that Barrios was attempting to "tour" rural Paraguay, playing in as many towns as possible. The review of the concert in Paraguarí appeared in *La Evolución* of May 4:

### CONCERT

Señor Agustín Barrios obtained new triumphs in the concert he gave in Paraguarí. In the spacious salon of the municipality he performed the concert that we had announced on a previous occasion.

The best of Paraguarí's society attended to hear the most excellent guitarist who attracted the attention of those who had the opportunity to hear him play his favorite instrument.

Señor Barrios was very well applauded and congratulated.

Barrios must have been extremely motivated to undertake a concert tour of the small rural towns of Paraguay. He was attempting to expand his horizons beyond Asunción. He was evidently not too successful for in *La Evolución* of July 20, 1909, the following article appears:



The well-known guitarist, Don Agustín Barrios, has resolved, in response to the insistence of various guitar aficionados, to suspend his artistic tour of the Republic and give guitar lessons at his home as well as at the homes of students.

Given the artistic endowments of the excellent guitarist, we do not doubt that the classes will be very well attended.

On August 2, 1909, there began a small one-column ad in *La Evolución*:

Agustín P. Barrios  
Guitar lessons in your home. Easy method.  
He can be seen on Azara Street corner of Caballero.

This advertisement appeared in every issue of *La Evolución* thereafter and was still running in the last issue the Paraguayan National Library has of the newspaper dated February 16, 1910. For over six months Barrios ran this ad. It obviously must have done some good. It reveals how much more professional and serious Barrios had become and underscores the reality that there was little possibility of becoming a full time concert artist in Paraguay and that to survive he would have to dedicate himself to teaching.

He continued to perform as this announcement of an upcoming concert in *La Evolución* of August 16, 1909, relates:

Within a few short days the popular artist Agustín Barrios will give a concert in San Bernardino.

When the date for the celebration of the concert draws near, we will publish the program for all those who are interested.

This is the last reference to Barrios in any of the newspapers of that time. Whether he carried out this concert as well as any others is not known. He performed November 25, 1909, at Villa Rica a song entitled *Kyguá Verá* (see page 39) with soprano Avelina Gugguari. This poem, which Barrios set to music, is by the Paraguayan poet Marcelino Pérez Martínez. It was published years later in Buenos Aires in an edition with piano accompaniment adapted by Chilean composer Omar Perez Freire, a good friend of Barrios and the author of the popular tune *Ay, Ay, Ay*.

At this point it is necessary to introduce yet another person who was important in influencing Barrios: Viriato Diaz Perez, a Spaniard by birth who emigrated to Paraguay in the early 1900's. An intellectual, author of numerous books and articles, literary critic and teacher, Diaz Perez was also a



follower of theosophy. He reputedly introduced Barrios to theosophic doctrines and beliefs. Diaz Perez's influence on him, particularly in the areas of aesthetics, philosophy and metaphysics was profound.<sup>11</sup>

Diaz Perez had an "international" perspective and strongly urged Barrios to leave Paraguay. In January of 1910, he wrote a letter of introduction to an Argentine friend, Señor Mario Villar Sáenz Valiente, publisher of the Buenos Aires newspaper *La Nación* and an influential and important member of the "upper class" in the Argentine capitol. He was the nephew of Roque Sáenz Peña, President of Argentina from 1910-14. Sila Godoy, who spoke with him in Buenos Aires in the 1940's, reports that Valiente, after hearing Barrios play in the town of Corrientes, invited him to come to Buenos Aires under his patronage. In 1910 Argentina had completed 100 years as a nation and it promised to be a year of frequent celebrations and festivities. Valiente evidently felt that the outstanding young guitarist would fit right in with the atmosphere of celebration. Barrios reportedly played concerts in Corrientes, Resistencia, Posadas and Encarnación during this period.

Bordas claims that it was at this time that Barrios first expressed the idea of a pseudonym for his artistic identity: Cacique Nitzuga – "Chief Nitzuga" (spelling Agustín backwards and changing the s to a z). He supposedly got the idea from an acquaintance named Juan Cristómo Centurión y Martínez who used an anagram form of his name: J.C. Roenicunt y Zenitram. Bordas further states that no mention was made at this time of the name "Mangoré".

The next reference to be found is from the inscription on the photo shown below. This photo was probably taken in 1909 and shows Barrios with his wooden-peg guitar sitting in the classical manner (with a footstool). The dedication is to Victor Viera, a school chum of his:

To my dear unforgettable compatriot and ex-schoolmate,  
Victor Viera. Demonstration of intimate affection.

A. Barrios

(Rio Paraná aboard the "Curumbá")

Souvenir of my artistic tour  
1910, February 25

Finally he was on his way to the "land of opportunity" – Buenos Aires. His desire to depart Paraguay was no doubt fueled by Nicolino Pellegrini who on August 8, 1909 took a month long trip to Buenos Aires specifically to arrange for the publishing of "an infinity of pieces by him". Buenos Aires was the capitol of the music business and the major center of culture in South America – the logical place to pursue a career as a performing concert artist.



With this draws to a close the first period of Barrios' life and begins another which will see him grow in skill, knowledge and experience and mature into a formidable composer and superlative guitarist. Barrios really had no choice but to leave his native Paraguay. He would not return until twelve years later after conquering the concert halls of Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Rio de Janeiro.



License plate from San Juan Bautista proclaiming that it is the "Cradle of Mangoré"





A mi querido e inolvidable compatriota y  
condiscípulo, Víctor Vera.

Demstración de interés  
afecto.

Rio Paranaí -  
a bordo del "Corum-  
baí" -

J. Garrin

Recuerdo de  
mi gira artística

1910

Nov 25 -





Barrios in Buenos Aires with his new José Ramirez guitar, circa 1910. This instrument was his first fine guitar (note the gear tuners).



## CHAPTER TWO

# THE ARTIST MATURES

**B**uenos Aires in 1910 must have been a dynamic place. Extensive immigration (particularly from Italy) had taken place over the previous 20 years and it was a bustling center of commerce, politics and art. The Teatro Colón was established in 1908 and ties with Europe were extensive and vital. For the first time in his life Barrios was discovering “European” culture through the internationally cosmopolitan atmosphere of Buenos Aires.

Classical music, popular music, tango, folk music — all could be found in this great city. After his arrival Barrios was under the patronage of Sáenz Valiente. He played private concerts for the employees of his benefactor’s newspaper. Sáenz Valiente gave Barrios his first fine guitar, by Spanish luthier José Ramirez. It is interesting to point out that the relationship of an artist enjoying the patronage of a well-to-do benefactor was a pattern that Barrios would repeat numerous times in his life and one with which he must have been comfortable.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly his first experiences in this type of relationship with Sáenz Valiente were extremely positive, exciting and, in a certain sense, downright miraculous for this “country bumpkin” from Paraguay.

The world of classic guitar in Buenos Aires at this time, which included such luminaries as Antonio Jimenez Manjón, Julio Sagreras and Domingo Prat, was thriving. Barrios now had the opportunity to attend guitar concerts that were presented with regularity. He very likely saw Miguel Llobet when he made his first tour to Argentina in 1910. Barrios, who years later declared Llobet to be the greatest guitarist he had ever heard,<sup>2</sup> did not make the great Spanish guitarist’s acquaintance at this time.

Barrios was a crude gem bearing little resemblance to the polished jewel he would become a decade later. He had no substantial repertoire and he was perhaps ignorant of many things relating to guitar technique and



musicianship. But in this new world, where opportunities were perhaps a 1000% more abundant than in Asunción, he could experience great performers in concert (the Teatro Colón featured top European artists) as well as make many stimulating friendships with artists, professionals and intellectuals.

Barrios made his living playing in movie theatres providing music for silent films. He also played incidental music for theatres that featured live drama, making good friends with a well known actor of the day, one Paravicini (who taught him the secrets of costume and makeup, skills which he would employ some 20 years later as Nitsuga Mangoré). He was still a long way from being a formed concert artist, playing in cinemas, cafes and for private functions. He did not simply arrive in Buenos Aires and commence "a concert career".

I suspect that sometime in late 1910 or early 1911 Barrios journeyed to Chile and even supposedly went as far as Peru.<sup>3</sup> Not much is known about Barrios' stay in Chile (presumably Santiago). Boettner claims that "there he presented himself in concert with an inferior program. The critics attacked him harshly; he lacked knowledge of important musical works, his technique was not purified, he used metal strings. This was a 'cold shower' for our artist." It is quite probable that Barrios went to Chile because of his friendship with Omar Perez Freire, the well known Chilean composer of popular music. As stated above, Perez Freire adapted a guitar accompaniment that Barrios had written for the poem *Kyguá Verá*, and gave the following comments on page four of the edition:

Buenos Aires, October 22, 1912

I feel proud in having collaborated, though modestly, as, it has not been possible, to capture the taste and feeling that only the prodigious hand of Barrios can do.

Nevertheless you can believe me when I state that I have done what is possible, I am not capable of more.

O. Perez Freire

In 1912 Barrios composed the tango *Don Perez Freire* for his friend. At this time he had a repertoire made up primarily of "popular music" — tangos, traditional themes, folk songs, etc. and such a repertoire, though pleasing, was not what critics expected in a concert. As Barrios did not have a "formal musical education", wherever he went he lacked contacts with certain levels of the academic and artistic communities. He was by experience more familiar with the "world of the street" than the "halls of academia". This explains why he met Perez Freire (a successful popular musician) and not



*Ofrecido à mi viejo y querido amigo Don JUAN M. SOSA ESCALADA*

# Kyguã - Verá

CANCIÓN  
PARAGUAYA



MÚSICA DE  
AGUSTÍN P.  
BARRIOS

LETRA DE  
MARCELINO  
PÉREZ .....  
MARTINEZ

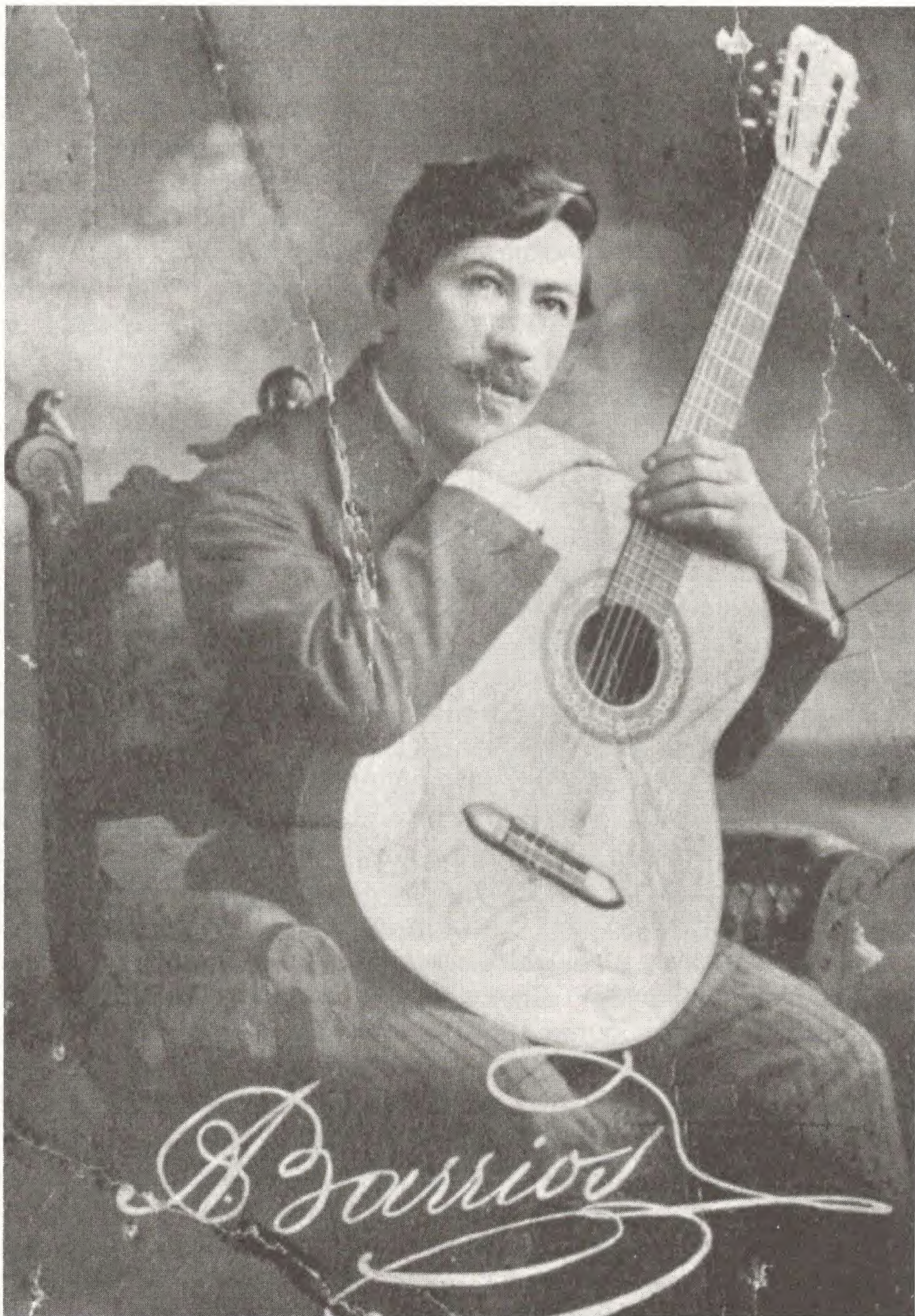
*Cantada por primera vez, por la Sra. AVELINA GUGGIARI  
en un festival celebrado en la Ciudad de Villorica, Paraguay,  
el 25 de Noviembre de 1909, y en Buenos Aires, en el Centro  
Paraguayo, el 13 de Mayo de 1920, por la Sra. María STELLA MORRIS.*

Title page of the song *Kyguá Verá*, a poem about a special type of ornate hair comb that Paraguayan women wear. Barrios set the poem to music in the year 1909 even though this edition was not published until the 1920's.









Barrios in 1912. The guitar is different, probably by Rodolfo Camacho of Argentina. Very faintly on the bottom part of the guitar's face can be read "A Sarita" (To little Sara), a female acquaintance to whom he dedicated this photo as well as the mazurka of the same name.



the leading classical musicians of the day. And of course, the fact that he played the guitar (and not the violin or piano) was itself an impediment to his entering into the "classical world".

On this trip to Chile Barrios passed through Córdoba and made friends with Martín Gil, an astronomer and a well known guitar aficionado. Domingo Prat, in his *Diccionario de Guitarristas*, dedicates over a full page to Gil stating that he studied guitar with Juan Alais in the 1890's and later with Carlos García Tolsa (who dedicated the sonata *Al Fin Solos* to Gil which Barrios and Sosa Escalada had performed in Asunción in 1909). It is easy to see how these two men formed a profound friendship. Gil was one of the few people associated with the guitar in Argentina who early on recognized Barrios' talent and publicly praised him.

Bordas states that in 1922 Barrios commented: "The most spiritual time that I have found on my pilgrim's journey I experienced in Córdoba, with Martín Gil, astronomer, philosopher, writer and guitarist like myself." It was Gil who revealed the marvels of astronomy to Barrios through his telescope. The story is related that Gil had lost a son two years before and ever since the tragedy he could not bring himself to look through his telescope. So great was his desire for his new friend to experience the wonder of the universe that he overcame his anxiety, sat down at the telescope, and invited Agustín to experience the heavens, spending hours with him exploring the stars and planets.

At some point in 1912 Barrios departed Buenos Aires and journeyed to Montevideo. Here he formed a friendship with Martín Borda y Pagola, a successful and well-to-do rancher of livestock who was a guitar aficionado. Prat states that Borda y Pagola was a "distinguished amateur Uruguayan guitarist" who was the "owner of various instruments of great value, for which his house has become a center for talented cultivators of the guitar." It is quite probable that friends in Buenos Aires gave Borda y Pagola's address to Barrios and that he journeyed to Montevideo seeking another patron relationship.

Borda y Pagola proved to be a great supporter of Barrios, giving him at various times over the next 15 years critical financial as well as emotional support. The story has been related that Borda y Pagola became Barrios' protector and that he constantly urged Barrios to write down his compositions (something which he was lax in carrying out even though he was quite capable of doing so with his formidable calligraphic skills). At some point Borda y Pagola became so frustrated with Barrios that he reputedly locked him in a room, declaring that he would not free him until he had written down many of his compositions. These original manuscripts are in the possession of Borda y Pagola's daughter, Aida Borda y Pagola de Pío Bano, who resides in Maldonado, Uruguay.<sup>4</sup>



Miguel Herrera Klinger (b. 1885 in Salto), a Uruguayan guitarist who was a friend and admirer of Barrios, wrote in 1956 some twenty pages of remembrances of Barrios' years in Uruguay entitled *Notes for a Biography* (which end abruptly and are obviously unfinished). Though incomplete, these notes are an interesting and revealing source of information about Barrios' years in Uruguay. According to Klinger, Barrios first appeared in Montevideo in the fall of 1912 (March-April-May in the southern hemisphere) in a concert organized by Carlos Trápani, the owner of the leading music



Don Martín Borda y Pagola, Barrios' supporter and friend in Uruguay.

store at that time in Montevideo and a center of guitaristic activity. Trápani proved over the years to be a great promoter of Barrios, being the first to publish his works (in 1921). This concert featured Barrios as well as Spanish guitarist Francisco Callejas and the Uruguayan Julio Otermin.

Of this performance, Klinger declared that Barrios presented "a program that was musically bad with an interpretation that was beautiful, strangely moving. If musical interpretation that attracts and moves an audience is an art, then Agustín Barrios was an artist and on this occasion he was doubly so because he played only modest pieces that lacked hierarchy. The novelty was the metal string, from which he drew forth rare effects with sonorities that were unknown to us, due to his way of smoothing the harshness of the metal, making it appropriate for a concert. All these





This photo was taken in Montevideo, circa 1912. Barrios on left, Borda y Pagola seated and standing on the right is Carlos Trápani, the owner of a music store and promoter of Barrios.



qualities and the decided manner of his playing the instrument, making it shine with brilliance in the execution of works exhibiting an excellent technique of both hands, contributed to a totality of factors that made his playing extremely interesting. So interesting was this man to us that before we knew it two hours had passed listening to his interpretations and we would have been there two hours more if Don Carlos Trápani had not informed us that it was 1 o'clock in the morning..."

At this point a few observations on Barrios' use of metal strings are appropriate. I am of the opinion that this was something that started early in his life playing his father's guitar in Misiones. I think that he may have tried gut strings at some point, but by the time this came about he was already quite comfortable playing with steel. Furthermore, I also suspect that obtaining the best brand of gut strings in Paraguay circa 1900 was impossible (Pirastro Strings made in Italy were not readily available in South America except in very large metropolitan cities). By the time Barrios arrived in Buenos Aires he had already become accustomed to steel strings. Godoy states that a musician in Venezuela who knew Barrios once declared that his use of metal strings was due to the fact that he perspired profusely and that this made using gut strings an impossibility. Whatever the reason(s), there is no doubt that his use of steel strings proved to be a factor that worked against him in the classic guitar worlds of Buenos Aires and Montevideo of that time.

Klinger states that on a certain occasion when he was in Buenos Aires looking through sheet music at the store Agromayor and Co., where luminaries of the guitar world would meet every afternoon, he happened to overhear a conversation between Andrés Segovia, Regino Sáinz de la Maza and Domingo Prat regarding Barrios: "The discussion, polarized around steel strings as an element of art, was contrary. Only Sáinz de la Maza did not outright reject steel strings, as long as it was Barrios who played on them. 'Well, as far as I'm concerned,' said Segovia, 'I wouldn't know what to do with that wire fence!'" Klinger also states of the 1912 concert that "if the majority of the 30 attendees had been told that the guitarist were going to play with metal strings, nobody would have come."

At some point Barrios adopted the use of little beads of vulcanized rubber through which he threaded each of the metal strings, sliding this small "sordina" down flush to the bridge. This had the effect of eliminating the twang associated with steel, producing a smoother and very audible sound. Klinger claims that Barrios began using this procedure after playing for the famous Italian conductor Gino Marinuzzi (in Rio de Janeiro in 1919) who supposedly suggested the idea to Barrios. This may be the case; exactly



when Barrios began using these "rubber sordinas" is unknown, but it was some time before 1920. Even with these sordinas, criticism and opposition to Barrios and his metal strings ensued.

In my research, talking with those who knew Barrios, I have been told that he used only the first string of metal, also only the trebles, and even all six strings of metal. Perhaps all of these claims are true, depending on the time and circumstances. I tend to believe that he used metal strings for the trebles and wrapped silk basses. The photo of Barrios on page 82 clearly shows these small rubber mutes on the first, second and third strings. This photo carries a dedication dated 1923, and was probably taken a short time earlier.

During 1912 Barrios met in Montevideo the great blind Spanish virtuoso Antonio Jimenez Manjón (1866-1919) who had migrated to the Rio de la Plata area in 1893 and resided in Buenos Aires. According to Klinger, over Barrios' objections, a group of friends arranged the encounter which took place at the offices of the newspaper *Diario de la Plata*: "Both were applauded enthusiastically. Manjón played his own compositions and ended the program with his magnificent *Canción India*, one of the greatest compositions ever written for guitar. And Barrios, what could he put forth in opposition to a program of such solvency? Only his sonata *A Mi Madre* and the rest of no consequence. After hearing Manjón, Barrios declared that it would be a sacrilege for him to play any more, thus rendering homage to maestro Manjón and his works. Barrios could only be heard as a novelty due to his metal strings...he still had much to learn to arrive at what he would some day become."

Barrios' strong points at this time were his technique and musicality and his weak point was his lack of substantial repertoire. Klinger claims that Barrios' attempts at transcription during this period were deficient not because he lacked the talent but for the fact that "he did not study the works enough. He would barely look at a work and set forth to play it, forgetting some passage, something which critics flew in his face immediately. Barrios did not like the works of other composers because they did not inspire him. Before long his first original works came forth: a gavotte, two or three minuets, all bad, worse because they were so vulgar."

On June 22, 1912, Barrios' oldest brother Rómulo committed suicide in Posadas, Argentina. He had tuberculosis and was depressed about the state of his health. Evidently Agustín did not receive the news very quickly and did not return to Paraguay for the funeral.

This was a period of continued growth for the young artist. He studied harmony, utilizing Hugo Riemann's text.<sup>5</sup> In 1913 he began recording for the Uruguayan labels Atlanta and Artigas<sup>6</sup> and produced 12 phonograph



records that reveal the kind of repertoire he had developed in the two years since leaving Paraguay. These recordings may very well be the first ever made by a classical guitarist:

Original works: *Don Perez Freire*, *Tango No.2*, *Vidalita con variaciones*, *Jota*, *Milonga*, *Divagación*, *A Mi Madre*, *Pepita*, *La Bananita*, *Aires Criollos*, *Divagaciones Criollas* and *Aires Andaluces*.

Transcriptions: *Ay, Ay, Ay* (Freire), *La Paloma* (Yradier), *Marcha Paraguaya* (Dupuy), *Matilde* (García Tolsa), *Divagación Chopiniana* (García Tolsa), *Madrigal* (Sosa Escalada), *San Lorenzo* (Silva), and *Oro y Plata Vals* (Lehar).

Such was the “vulgar” repertoire that he presented: either original works or popular tunes, marches, tangos, etc. (three of the original works being tangos). It illustrates the “non-classical” levels on which he was functioning. Godoy claims that this kind of “popular-folkloric” repertoire was developed in Buenos Aires playing in cinemas and as *entre act* for dramatic theatre presentations. Three of these works are in the extended medley form: *Divagaciones Criollas*, *Aires Criollos* and *Aires Andaluces* (which obviously worked well to “fill time” in the formats in which he found employment). There are no classical works and no substantial works from the concert guitar repertoire of that time (even though he could have performed works of Sor and Aguado). This repertoire is decidedly “South American popular” and illustrates the aversion Klinger claims Barrios had to performing at this time the standard type concert works and transcriptions. It also underscores Barrios’ orientation: since he did not, for example, enroll in a conservatory of music or even seek instruction in guitar from any number of well established teachers of the day, his priorities were centered on the world of popular music where he no doubt had many friends who enjoyed tangos and popular songs and didn’t mind that what they were hearing was played on steel strings.

Klinger refers to the “sense of self confidence” that Barrios possessed. No doubt this came about because he was, during his formative years in Paraguay, a “big fish in a small pond” and also because he had considerable natural technical abilities. Perhaps this is what kept him from seeking guitar instruction upon his arrival in Buenos Aires. Maybe he felt somewhat of an “outsider” from the classic guitar community because he did not use gut strings. Whatever the reasons, Barrios was definitely “his own man” and this attitude proved to be a valuable asset as his knowledge and abilities increased.

Cédar Viglietti, in his fine book *Origen e Historia de la Guitarra*, states that the record shows “after 1913 four concerts by the Paraguayan Barrios



in Minas". This refers to a period of approximately 10 years, citing the last appearance by Barrios on November 22, 1923, with famed Uruguayan violinist/composer Eduardo Fabini. Exactly when he met Fabini and began playing concerts with him is not known – I seriously doubt that it was much before 1920 (see page 88). Fabini was educated in Brussels and was one of the leading Uruguayan musicians of his day. He also played the guitar. The fact that he would perform in concert with Barrios underscores the progressive achievement and subsequent high esteem and respect Barrios earned since his arrival in 1912.

These years in Uruguay (1912-1915) were no doubt a period of expansion and growth. He must have spent a good deal of time in Borda y Pagola's country *estancia* (ranch) and made many friends, some of whom also opened their homes to the young guitarist. Barrios was particularly fond of staying with friends (who were always inviting him). He reputedly lived one entire year with guitarist Luis Pasquet (1882-1940) in Salto. These "visits" with friends could last as little as a few days or be prolonged into several months and were a pattern Barrios would repeat throughout his life. During all the many years he lived in Uruguay (from 1912-16 and off and on during the 1920's until about 1926) he performed not only in Salto, but also in Tacuarembó, Rio Negro, Cerro Chato, Cerro Largo, Lavalleja, Fraile Muerto, Rivera, and Florida (and undoubtedly in a great many other towns).

During the period from 1914 through 1916 Barrios was journeying back and forth from Uruguay to southern Brazil. The newspaper *O Libertador* of the city of Pelotas in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, in an article dated July 4, 1929, announcing an upcoming concert by Barrios in Pelotas, states that "after more than 15 years Pelotas will once again be able to hear the concert guitarist Agustín Barrios". Pelotas is quite near the Uruguayan border. Barrios was gradually working his way north and it is quite probable that he eventually located another "benefactor", probably in Sao Paulo. This would explain what he was doing during this period – working on his compositional skills and technical abilities under someone's patronage, allowing him to devote maximum concentration to his chosen art. Little is known of this period, and the only entry on the record is this program from a performance in Rio de Janeiro in 1916 (see page 49).

This program reveals a more substantial repertoire including transcriptions of Bach, Verdi, Chopin, Grieg and Mendelssohn, as well as music by Aguado, Giuliani, Coste and Arcas. Four original works are listed: *Rapsodia Americana* and *Jota Aragonesa* (both of which figured in his repertoire from at least 1912) and two new pieces: *Bicho Feio-tango humorístico* ("Ugly Bug Tango" – which was one of his most popular pieces), and a waltz entitled *Recuerdos del Pacífico* ("Memories of the Pacific"), written after his return from Chile.



Salão Nobre

do

Jornal de Commercio

Grande Concerto de Violão

pelo eminente virtuose


compositor paraguayo

**BARRIOS**

TERÇA FEIRA, 1º DE AGOSTO DE

1916 AS 20 ½ HORAS

Pap. Sul Americana, 7 de Setembro, 187 - 2302-7-916.



PROGRAMMA

PRIMEIRA PARTE

1 — Marcha Heróica.....

Giuliani

2 — Chanson du Printemps.....

Mendelssohn

3 — Recuerdos del Pacifico.....

Barrios

4 — Rondó brilhante.....

Aguado

5 — a) Sarabanda .....

Bach

b) Meditação .....

Tolson

6 — Concerto em la menor.....

Arcas

SEGUNDA PARTE

1 — Nocturno op. 9 n. 2 .....

Chopin

2 — Phantasia sobre motivos da

Traviata.....

Vardi-Arcas

3 — Andante e estudo.....

Coste

4 — a) Chant du paysan.....

Grieg

b) Bicho feio I, tango humorístico

Barrios

5 — Rapsodia Americana.....

Idem

6 — Jota Aragonesa, variações.....

Idem

ENTRADA 10\$000



Barrios began giving concerts with more frequency in 1917. At this time “something” started happening in his creative mind – the beginning of an intense period of activity spanning a decade in which he would compose 76 compositions, transcribe 39 pieces, and incorporate 20 selections by other guitarist-composers into his reperotire (and probably a good deal more as these are minimal compilations).

From 1916 up until June of 1920 Barrios was in Brazil. Basing himself in Sao Paulo, he played concerts in southern Brazil. Four programs from this time have been located: three from Sorocaba (May 18, 19 and 25, 1918) and one from the city of Santos (December 12, 1918) both in the State of Sao Paulo:

#### May 18, 1918, Sorocaba

- First Part:** 1. Marcha Heróica (Giuliani)  
 2. Chanson de Printemps (Mendelssohn)  
 3. Recuerdos del Pacífico (Barrios)  
 4. Meditacao (García Tolsa)  
 5. Rapsodia Hespanhola (Parga)
- Second Part:** 1. Concerto en La (Arcas)  
 2. Nocturno Op. 9, No. 2 (Chopin)  
 3. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
 4. Bicho Feo! (Barrios)  
 5. Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)

#### May 19, 1918, Sorocaba

- First Part:** 1. Rondo Brillante (Aguado)  
 2. Berceuse (Schumann)  
 3. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)  
 4. Pot-Pourri Lyrico (Barrios)  
 5. Tarantella (Albano)
- Second Part:** 1. Capricho Arabe (Tarrega)  
 2. Bouree (Bach)  
 3. Rapsodia Latinoamericana (Barrios)  
 4. Il Trovatore (Verdi)  
 5. Marcha Paraguaya (Dupuy)



May 25, 1918, Sorocaba

- First Part:** 1. Polonaise Phantastique (Arcas)  
2. Adagio Cantabile (Beethoven)  
3. Meditacao (García Tolsa)  
4. Jota Aragoneza (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Phantasia Morisca (Espinosa)  
2. Gavota Romántica (Csibulka)  
3. a) Bicho Feo (Barrios)  
b) Adieu (Barrios)  
4. Pot-Pourri Lirico (Barrios)  
5. Marcha Paraguaya (Dupuy)

During all these years he was expanding his knowledge of the guitar and composition as these programs indicate: he had composed by this time *Un Sueño en la Floresta* (also called *Souvenir d'un Rêve*), *Marcha Heróica*, *Pot-Pourri Lírico* (a medley of popular opera airs from *Rigoletto*, *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Tosca*, *Aida* and *Guarany*), *Adieu*, *Rapsodia Latino Americana*, *Bicho Feo*, *Recuerdos del Pacífico* and the waltz *Saudades do Rio de Janeiro*. He also had acquired a bit more of the standard concert guitar repertoire including *Capricho Arabe* of Tárrega, *Fantasia Variée* of Sor and *Grande Phantasia de Concerto* of Arcas. His abilities at transcribing had also increased offering guitar adaptations of Bach, Beethoven, Bufaletti, Chopin, Csibulka, Grieg, Mendelssohn and Schumann.

At this time he made friends with the Brazilian luthier Romeo Di Giorgio, who made a guitar for Barrios with a 20th fret which made a high c possible on the first string (which he utilized in his magnificent tremolo piece *Un Sueño en la Floresta*). On September 12, 1918 Barrios made a testimonial for Di Giorgio in which he stated that in his "latest concert at the Sao Paulo Conservatory" he played Di Giorgio's "splendid instrument".

It would appear that around 1918 a significant qualitative step upward in his compositions can be noted. In the next year and a half he will compose *Mazurka Apasionata*, *Dos Estudios de Concierto*, *Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello*, *Gavota Madrigal*, *Allegro Sinfónico* and *Vals No. 3* (these being works that have been located in manuscript) as well as *Canzoneta*, *Danza Macabra*, *Cajita de Música*, *El Carrousell*, *Loreley* (*Romanza Capricho*) and *Flores Murchas* (all works for which no manuscripts have been located). His version of the *Jota Aragonesa*, *Marcha Paraguaya*, as well as *Rapsodia Americana* are pieces he had begun playing early on after his arrival in the Rio de la Plata from Paraguay.

In September of 1918 it was reported in Paraguay that Barrios had died in the town of Salto. Barrios was of course alive and well living in Sao Paulo. This would happen again some years later, his death being reported in 1934



Conservatorio Dramatico e Musical

ULTIMO  
CONCERTO DE VIOLÃO

Pelo insigne  
concertista paraguayo Barrios

NA NOITE DE  
QUINTA-FEIRA  
12 DE DEZEMBRO DE 1918

As 8 e 45 p. m.

PROGRAMMA

I PARTE

- 1 Fantaisie variée . . . . . Sor
- 2 Adagio . . . . . Beethoven
- 3 Rondó brilhante . . . . . Aguado
- 4 Gavotte-madrigal . . . . . Barrios
- 5 Meditação . . . . . Tolsa
- 6 Rapsodia hespanhola . . . Barrios

Gravou como extra a  
salsa de sua autoria  
"Saudades do  
Rio de Janeiro"

II PARTE

- 1 Grande phantasia de concerto. Arcas
- 2 Capricho arabe. . . . . Tárrega
- 3 Chant du paysan . . . . . Grieg
- 3 "Página de album . . . . . Barrios
- 4 Minueto em lá . . . . . Bufaleti
- 5 Pot-pourri lirico . . . . . Barrios
- 6 Gran Jota . . . . . Barrios

Gravou como extra  
a "Bicho Feo"  
tango brasileiro  
de sua autoria

On this particular program, written in longhand in Portuguese, is the observation that Barrios "played as an encore a waltz of his authorship *Saudades do Rio de Janeiro*" and that he also played "twice by request the tango *Bicho Feo*."





Barrios circa 1918 for DiGiorgio ad.

first in Mexico (in April) and later in Venezuela (in December).<sup>7</sup> How these false reports ever came about is not known, but on three occasions Barrios had the rare privilege of reading his own eulogies!

By 1919 Barrios' constant concertizing in southern Brazil had begun to accrue for him a reputation as an outstanding artist. Such was his renown that he met in that year Arturo Napoleao (1845-1925), the Brazilian pianist/composer, whose *Romanza* Barrios had transcribed for guitar. Upon hearing Barrios play it, Napoleao afterwards wrote this dedication:



To Don Agustín Barrios

Your adaptation for guitar of my *Romanza* is an enchantment, and your playing another!

Nothing more can I say.

Arturo Napoleao

Rio, June 1919

A few months later Barrios would have the great thrill of playing for Gino Marinuzzi in Rio de Janeiro. Marinuzzi, the world famous conductor of the La Scala Opera of Milan, was in Brazil presenting some performances at the opera house. He had heard of Barrios and was curious, inviting him to play at a special, intimate nonpublic get-together that he had arranged for about 20 friends (many of whom were no doubt members of the orchestra and knowledgeable professional musicians). This was for Barrios, as Klinger states, a true *prueba de fuego* ("trial by fire"): playing his own compositions for one of the leading conductors in the world in the company of sophisticated performers.

And what was the outcome? Obviously quite positive, for according to Klinger "Barrios was applauded, and congratulated warmly and the Maestro, upon bidding farewell, gave him a photo of himself on which he wrote: 'To the great Barrios, who has revived the art of Galilei and Simon Molinari, with affectionate admiration, Gino Marinuzzi. Rio, September 30, 1919.'" To receive approval from one of the leading musicians of the day not only for his technical abilities as a performer but also for his talent as a composer must have been a great boost to Barrios' self-confidence and sense of self-esteem. Had he been able to maintain direct contact with Marinuzzi after his return to Italy, Barrios undoubtedly would have been able to arrange a tour to Europe and his life would have turned out quite different than it did. It is a great pity that he never went to Europe except in 1934-35 when it was, in many ways, too late for him.

The culmination of this successful year occurred on November 6 with a special invitation from the President of Brazil, Epitasio Pessoa, to play at the Presidential Palace a concert for diplomats and ministers. Barrios was definitely beginning to "arrive". After his performance this select corps of "high-ranking diplomats from the Americas and Europe" raised their champagne glasses toasting "the great Paraguayan artist."

Klinger states that in the period of seven years that passed since his initial debut in Montevideo in 1912 "Barrios made extraordinary progress in composition. Ever since (1920) all of his works are beautiful and models of their kind. He had found his path...with works of extremely beautiful me-



lodic modulation, set in a form of instrumentation unknown to the guitaristic art." Barrios had "caught fire" and the decade from 1918 to 1928 will be his greatest period of creative activity. He must have studied his Riemann text thoroughly and he also must have studied quite a bit more of the standard guitar repertoire. His creative mind had developed and his technical abilities had increased dramatically. The artist had matured and miracles were on the horizon....



## CHAPTER 3:

# THE JOURNEY TO GREATNESS

**I**n the Montevideo daily *EL País* dated June 18, 1920, Barrios' return to Uruguay is announced:

Tomorrow, according to our sources, the much applauded concert guitarist Agustín Barrios will arrive from Brazil. He will give three concerts in the Verdi Institute. The dates for the concerts have not been set as yet.

As chance would have it, Andrés Segovia was in Montevideo at this time giving concerts. He had given one concert (on June 11) by the time Barrios arrived in mid June. On June 27 Segovia gave a second concert at the prestigious Teatro Solís. Barrios, who had not performed in Montevideo since 1916, gave his first concert on July 3 at the Verdi Institute with the following program:

- First Part:**
1. Serenata Española (Parga)
  2. Minuet (Beethoven)
  3. Flores Murchitas-vals (Barrios)
  4. Romanza (Napoleao)
  5. Meditación (García Tolsa)
  6. Pot-Pourri Lírico (arr. Barrios)

- Second Part:**
1. Bouree (Bach)
  2. Air de Ballet (Ferranti)
  3. Nocturne (Chopin)
  4. Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello (Barrios)
  5. The Soul of María Ester (Mazurka Apasionatta)
  6. Gran Jota (Barrios)



The following evening of July 4 Segovia's third concert in the Teatro Solís featured this program:

- First Part:** 1. Minuet in E (Sor)  
2. Study in Bb (Sor)  
3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
4. Minuet (Tárrega)  
5. Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)
- Second Part:** 1. Fugue (Bach)  
2. Minuet (Mozart)  
3. Berceuse (Schumann)  
4. Momento Musical (Schubert)  
5. Waltz (Chopin)  
6. Nocturne (Chopin)
- Third Part:** 1. Scherzo Gavotte (Tárrega)  
2. Serenata Española (Malats)  
3. La Maja de Goya (Granados)  
4. Danza Española (Granados)  
5. Torre Bermeja (Albeniz)

It is interesting to compare these two programs – Segovia's is a solid combination of Sor, Tárrega, Granados, Albeniz as well as the classics. His concert programs at this time included very little "20th century" repertoire. Barrios' is a combination of the classics (Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann in his own arrangements), a bit of Spanish and Latin American (Parga, Tolsa and Napoleao), and five original compositions.

Barrios' second concert took place three days later on July 6, again at the Verdi Institute:

- First Part:** 1. Canzoneta (Barrios)  
2. Berceuse (Schumann)  
3. a) Preludio (Tárrega)  
b) Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
4. Romanza (Mendelssohn)  
5. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)  
6. Tarantella (Albano)
- Second Part:** 1. Gavotte en rondo (Bach)  
2. Clair de Lune–Adagio (Beethoven)  
3. Two Preludes (Chopin)  
4. Sad Song (Tchaikowski)  
5. Minuet (Bufaletti)  
6. Grand Heroic March (Barrios)



Barrios completed his three-concert cycle two days later presenting on July 8, again at the Verdi Institute, a program comprised solely of his original works:

- First Part:** 1. Romance in Imitation of the Cello  
2. A Mi Madre  
3. Vals No. 3  
4. Allegro Sinfónico
- Second Part:** 1. Danza Macabra  
2. Souvenir d'un Rêve  
3. a) Cajita de Música  
b) El Carrousell  
4. Two Concert Studies
- Third Part:** 1. Loreley (Romance Caprice)  
2. Mazurka Apasionata  
3. Gavota Madrigal  
4. Gran Jota

Segovia gave his last concert in Montevideo on July 25 at the Teatro Solís:

- First Part:** 1. Sonata: andante-allegretto-minuet and rondo (Sor)  
2. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)
- Second Part:** 1. Gavotte (Bach)  
2. Andante (Haydn)  
3. Popular Song and Petite Study (Schumann)  
4. Preludio No. 15 (Chopin)
- Third Part:** 1. Prelude, Andantino, Prelude and Allegro (Tárrega)  
2. Study (Vieuxtemps)  
3. Mazurka (Tchaikowski)  
4. Sevilla (Albéniz)

Segovia shortly thereafter departed for Buenos Aires. It is a curious fact that the two great guitarists never met in the five weeks they both found themselves in Montevideo. Their meeting would have to wait till the following year in Buenos Aires. Barrios remained in Uruguay and on August 8 offered another concert at the Teatro Solís dedicated to the newly elected President of Paraguay Manuel Gondra:



- First Part**
1. Serenata Española (Parga)
  2. Romanza (Napoleao)
  3. Rondo in A (Aguado)
  4. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)
  5. a) Estudio de Concierto (Barrios)  
b) Allegro Sinfónico (Barrios)

- Second Part**
1. Romanza (Mendelssohn)
  2. Minuet (Beethoven)
  3. Melodía en Fa (Rubenstein)
  4. Waltz No. 7 (Chopin)

- Third Part**
1. Rapsodia Española (Parga-Barrios)
  2. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)
  3. Gavota Madrigal (Barrios)
  4. Mazurka Apassionata (Barrios)
  5. Gran Jota (Barrios)

Barrios at this time did not play in concert any music by Albéniz or Granados and the reason for this is the fact that the versions of their piano music transcribed initially by Tárrega – and later by Llobet and Segovia – had not yet achieved any diffusion in South America. Both Segovia and Barrios played Tárrega's *Capricho Arabe*, Schumann's *Berceuse* and a *Nocturne* by Chopin. Segovia's repertoire included a *Sonata* by Fernando Sor and numerous pieces by Tárrega and represents a "modern" concert guitar repertoire of the times (Segovia had not yet met any of that group of composers – Ponce, Torroba, Villa-Lobos, Castlenuovo-Tedesco, etc. who subsequently became associated with the "segovian repertoire" created over ensuing decades). In some respects, Barrios and Segovia were at this point in time not too different in their approach to concert repertoire: they both played "the classics" (Bach, Schumann, Chopin) as well as Spanish music (albeit Segovia played more of the "late 19th century" Spanish repertoire, represented by Tárrega-Albéniz-Granados, as contrasted with "mid 19th-century" Spanish repertoire created by Arcas-Parga-Broca etc.). Of course, in the area of original compositions there is no comparison possible. It is merely a question of degree: Segovia playing quite a bit more of the known guitar repertoire (Sor, Tárrega, etc.) as well as classical composers in transcription, and Barrios featuring original compositions as well as music by Latin Americans (Napoleao, Albano, García Tolsa). By 1920 Segovia had more or less developed this type of repertoire to its maximum and it is easy to see how his priorities for a "new modern repertoire" would lead him over the next decade to develop relationships



with contemporary European composers. Barrios, on the other hand, placed his emphasis on creating original compositions and this was his "new repertoire".

During the early part of 1921 Barrios became very ill with what was believed to be typhus. This he contracted while touring in western Uruguay and Entre Rios, Argentina. It took several months to regain his health, but he managed to recover completely and on April 12, 1921 this article appeared in the newspaper *El País*:

Barrios Concerts. The virtuoso Paraguayan composer, as we have announced, will offer his concerts Saturday the 16th and Sunday the 17th of the current month in La Lira Conservatory. The celebrated guitarist announces new works he has written. These are: *Vals de Primavera*, a study *La Catedral*, a *Prelude in G Minor* and *Humoresque*.

In *La Razon* of April 14 there appeared this interview with the artist:

Given the interest that the artistic personality of Barrios arouses in our public, we thought it opportune to interview the eminent guitarist with the object that he inform us of his next concerts, his intense labor in composing and his future tour to North America. We encountered him still visibly extenuated due to the illness that he contracted a few months ago which obligated him to return to the vivifying air of our beaches. The warm affability of Barrios made it possible for us to enter without delay into the following pleasant conversation:

How is your state of health and mind for your upcoming concerts?

Although I am not yet completely recovered, I find myself drawing strength from weakness, my plan being to spend the winter in Paraguay, whose beneficial climate I believe will return my lost energies, as I cannot shirk my duty to the public of Montevideo, which has always given me warm and affectionate encouragement.

And after your rest in Paraguay, what are your plans?

Return to my adopted homeland, Uruguay, from which to embark for Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Havana, Washington and New York, which make up my tour for 1921-22.

So that you propose to leave almost permanently South America, from which we presume you will go to Europe?



It will not be easy for me to estimate the amount of time I will be absent from South America given the absorbing, babylonian atmosphere of North America. A European tour is, naturally, something which pleases me greatly and would be a logical consequence of my visit to the great Republic of the North.

Do you still plan to continue for a long time your artistic career?

Without a doubt my activity as a concert artist is directly related to my state of health. But the dominant passion for me is composition, especially composition for guitar. In this regard I think I have added some works to the literature of this enchanting and difficult instrument.

Do you have any plans to publish your compositions?

I have been approached by various publishers in the Rio de la Plata, but as the majority of my works are accessible only to concert players, whom you can count on the fingers of one hand, there is no immediate incentive to realize such a project. Nevertheless, my goal is to publish my complete works in the United States.

We have seen announced for your concerts some new works. Are they your latest compositions?

As much as my precarious state of health has permitted, I have been able to compose five works for these recitals. I consider the most important, after *Vals de Primavera*, of a romantic cut, *La Catedral*, which consists of two movements, an "andante religioso" and an "allegro solemne".

I am also going to have the pleasure of playing in my concerts some tasteful transcriptions by Martín Borda y Pagola, talented Uruguayan dilettante, whose studious labors do honor to the national masters.

As can be seen, by the words of the concert artist Barrios, far from resting on his laurels, his mind is a laboratory in constant effervescence and it is logical to expect the Montevideo public to reward once more the meritorious and sincere efforts of this artist, whose career is a long illuminated journey.

Here is the first reference to what is no doubt Barrios' most widely played composition, *La Catedral*. The story is related that he based this piece (in its original two-movement form of *Andante Religioso* and *Allegro Solemne* — the *Prelude* would be added some 19 years later in El Salvador)



on an experience he had entering the Cathedral of San José in Montevideo: the broad, horizontal chords of the andante represent his impressions of the organist playing Bach in the cathedral. The ensuing allegro represents his leaving the calm, spiritual atmosphere of the cathedral and entering out into the street, where the hustle and bustle of the real world is represented by incessant 16th note arpeggio figures. At one point the church bell is heard. Barrios was an eclectic, programmatic composer and *La Catedral* is some of his finest writing in this vein – a perfect wedding of imagery, emotion and virtuosic technique.

Today it can be claimed that *La Catedral* figures among the concert guitar's greatest repertoire. The *Prelude in G Minor* is also a remarkable study in a Bach-like vein with extensive use of an inverted pedal. *Vals de Primavera* ("Springtime Waltz") is very romantic and popular in character with some interesting modulations. *Humoresque* is not particularly notable. This tendency in Barrios of creating on the one hand revolutionary guitar music of very high quality along side pieces of a lesser musical worth is a curious trait that marks this early period of his life. He evidently was not his own best critic. No matter what the level of inspiration, however, in all his music there is a command of musical form and a knowledge of guitar technique that is essentially masterful and "his own". The mystical conduit of Barrios' creative imagination was now wide open and flowing....

On April 16, 1921 the first of the two concerts Barrios gave at La Lira consisted of the following works:

- First Part:** 1. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
                   2. Traumerei (Schumann-Borda)  
                   3. Vals de Primavera (Barrios)  
                   4. Rondo in A (Aguado)
- Second Part:** 1. Gavotte (Bach)  
                   2. Cuento de Amor (Manjón)  
                   3. Two Concert Studies (Barrios)  
                   4. Dance of the Hours (Ponchielli-Borda)
- Third Part:** 1. Danza No. 5 (Granados)  
                   2. a) Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)  
                       b) Minuet (Tárrega)  
                   3. Mazurka Apassionata (Barrios)  
                   4. Gran Jota (Barrios)

Tárrega's *Minuet* as well as his masterpiece *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* have been added. The *Gran Jota* was based on Tárrega's version and consisted of 24 variations, being a real display of pyrotechnics on the guitar. The recording Barrios made in 1913 called simply *Jota* reveals a bit of this,



but no doubt the version he had developed by 1921 was vastly superior to this earlier treatment. This was the piece he used most frequently to close his concerts during the next ten years.

The following evening of April 17 Barrios performed these selections:

- First Part:** 1. Estudio Expresivo for portamento  
(Manjón)  
2. Romanza (Napoleao)  
3. Melody in F (Rubenstein)  
4. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne

- Second Part:** 1. Andante (Sor)  
2. Granada (Albéniz)  
3. a) Preludio en Sol Menor (Barrios)  
b) Humoresque  
4. Tarantella (Albano)

- Third Part:** 1. Capricho Español (Barrios)  
2. Waltz No. 7 (Chopin)  
3. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)  
4. Allegro Sinfónico (Barrios)

This program is quite different from those he played barely 9 months earlier upon his arrival from Brazil. It includes Albéniz and Granados as well as Sor's *Variations*. Segovia must have made quite an impression on the guitar world of Montevideo and this influence is reflected in these programs. The composer of *Tarantella*, a marvelous piece which Barrios would record twice, is given as Albano, whose full name was Levino Albano da Conceicao, a blind, black guitarist from Brazil from whom Barrios learned the basic *Tarantella*; however, he evidently reworked the piece quite a bit thus transforming it, a fact which led him in subsequent years to credit the piece as "Levino da Conceicao/Barrios" and finally simply as "Barrios". The exposure to the guitaristic currents of the Rio de la Plata area, which in some ways were more in touch with European concert guitar developments than its Brazilian counterpart,<sup>1</sup> enabled Barrios to discover an expanded world of guitar music – both original and transcribed – and this, together with his ever improving creative abilities, would see him develop his repertoire to its highest level within the next few years.

Barrios' friendship with Martín Borda y Pagola continued at this time stronger than ever. Borda y Pagola must have felt an almost "fatherly pride" witnessing Barrios' progress. He was still Barrios' greatest supporter, and continued to aid him financially as well as continually urge him to write down and publish his music. Barrios had his moments of triumph and financial



well-being, but the majority of his days were spent in modest circumstances living quite simply without substantial monetary resources. The letter Barrios wrote to Borda y Pagola at this time underscores this:

Montevideo, June 22, 1921

My unforgettable brother Pagolita:

I just arrived in the Capital, returning from Rivera and Santana de Lioramento, the last two towns that remained for me to visit during this season, before starting my projected trip toward my native land. Martín and I have done all we could to promote a positive result; I lavishing without moderation an art impregnated with sincerity; Martín putting forth indisputable good will and a determined effort as regards his functions as secretary-representative, all which you know, brother, is within the radius of serious action that is honorable and elevated, always necessary for those who have to open a pathway through the dense bramblebush of existence. Five concerts were given in the forementioned towns: two in Rivera, one at the Armour Meatpacking Plant, one in the Brasil/Uruguay Theatre in Santísima and one in the Caxival Club of the same Brazilian city. The first three concerts were brilliant failures: those in Rivera, because this population finds itself in a deplorable state of artistic-financial anemia, and the Armour Packing Plant, due to the miserable bad faith of the Manager of said institution, who, authorizing the realization of my recital in his facilities, informed us five days later that Armour would not contribute even one cent. How does one figure such effrontery? The recitals of the Brazil-Uruguay Theatre and Caxival Club were what saved the day, covering our lodging and transportation expenses. To accomplish all this took twelve days, and you can calculate, brother, what was the final result. As I know you have always been interested in knowing about my fast-moving artist's life, I can tell you these details of how I shall resolve this serious problem now that the tour is completed: transfer myself with Martín to Buenos Aires, give two or three concerts and immediately thereafter go to San Juan, where our great Joaquín can be found, give another three concerts, play in Córdoba on the return trip, in order to arrive in Asunción in good financial shape. What a problem, dear Pagolita! The mathematical formulas of Copernicus, of Newton or of Martín Gil, are ineffectual before this formidable equation... Three days now



I have been wracking my brains to see if I can find a way out of this hopeless labyrinth. After laborious and mature reflection, I see in the end that there is no other remedy than that of asking once again for your help, my forever generous brother. I need you to give me a new push. Your great soul and immense heart know so very well the sincerity of my request, and, in view of the fact that you have saved me from the brink of disaster before, it may not come as a surprise that I ask for your help now in order to depart these regions, since here artists are as pernicious as the lobster...Yes my dear brother. Help me with whatever you can, I am not asking for a specific sum. Also I must again now make the classic promise to pay you back immediately whatever your generosity allows me. But as I have in Buenos Aires, in addition to what I can earn from giving concerts, the possibility of earning something from recording gramophone records for Max Gluxman, there exists the realistic hope that I can repay your loan as quickly as possible. I also would be most appreciative, dear Pagolita, if you write me without delay to let me know what are the possibilities.

The manuscripts of my compositions are not yet finished due to the fact that I have not had any spare time lately. But you can rest easy, brother. I am going to set to work nonstop during these days in order to fulfill your desires, which are mine also. What I finish I will send to you immediately. This will not be my last letter to you. Before leaving this beloved Uruguay, with the sending of my compositions to you I will write you again and say my goodbyes, as I don't think it possible to have the pleasure of seeing you and embracing you.

In the meantime, beloved brother, with fond remembrances for all your family, receive the fraternal embrace from this brother who constantly dedicates to you his gratitude and unwavering affection.

Agustín Barrios

PS — My address is: Cufre 1762.

This letter verifies that Borda y Pagola was a recurrent source of support—both moral and financial—for Barrios. It confirms that he attempted to play throughout Uruguay (and southern Brazil) giving concerts in “backwater towns” that were extremely difficult places for an artist to achieve any kind of monetary success. It also illustrates how much travelling



Barrios had to do in order to continue concertizing: San Juan is in western Argentina and is closer to Chile, being several days journey in those days from Buenos Aires.

This letter also affirms that Agustín's younger brother Martín, who was a poet and actor, was with him at this time. Martín remained in Paraguay until 1916 when he "went abroad in search of his brother Agustín Pío". Exactly when he encountered his brother is open to conjecture. This letter is the earliest reference to him. Barrios eventually made Martín his "secretary/manager". Around 1921 Agustín began including Martín in many performances, incorporating his brother's poetry recitations in duet with his guitar playing.

Around this time he made good friends with young Julio Martinez Oyanguren (1901-1973), who years later became the major Uruguayan guitarist of his era, recording extensively in New York in the late 1930's. He was the first guitarist to record Barrios' music, releasing *Vals no. 3* and *Danza Guaraní* in the 1940's. Barrios and Oyanguren shared a warm friendship, and Oyanguren's formidable success in the United States proved to be a source of inspiration to Barrios who never lost his desire to concertize in North America.

About 9 weeks later Barrios sent another letter to his friend and patron:

Montevideo, August 29, 1921

My unforgettable brother Pagolita:

It may surprise you, undoubtedly, to know that I still find myself in Uruguayan territory. Still even more surprising not having received any news from me since your responding, without hesitation, and as always with generosity, to the request I made of you recently. Of course the conviction that aids me, which is my consolation, is that there could not fit in your loving heart the suspicion that my failure to write you is due to indifference or ingratitude. No! You well know that I render to your sublime moral gifts the sincere homage of a brotherly admiration. But no one knows, Pagolita, that which inscrutable destiny has in store for us on the morrow. A strange and mysterious weaving of events makes my anxiously desired trip to my homeland continue to be at this time a problem without solution. But don't think that I have abandoned my goals, brother. I am wracking my brains, without rest, in search of that solution which I must find sooner or later. It would be useless to tell you about the thousand things that have happened to me. It is enough for you to know, my dear Martín that, to attempt a remedy for the tightness of my economic condition, I have decided once and for all to publish



my works, here in Montevideo. This undertaking I wanted to realize in the United States, as you well know. Nevertheless I am now thinking that the publication of my musical compositions can be for me a fountain of resources. Don't you think so, brother? With this idea well in mind I have set to work during these past days, during which you have heard nothing from me, preparing with meticulous care the first four works that I plan to publish and which will see the light of day simultaneously. These works are: *Gavota Madrigal*, *Study in E Minor*, *Serenata Española* and *Vals de Primavera*. I have the immense satisfaction to inform you that Gayetano is helping me with loving and fraternal dedication in this enterprise and, it is natural for me to feel enthusiasm and to proceed forward with great vigor.

The four compositions are recently finished and ready to go to the printer. I have had to work quite a bit, since, I had to make two copies of each work, one for you and one for the publishing firm. And here is the crux of the matter: I have remained silent on purpose in order to give you a big fat surprise; believing that, since a few days ago, the first editions would be forthcoming, I wanted you to receive them suddenly, without any foreknowledge of publication. But things have not gone the way I had thought. Fifteen days ago I had to go to Sarandí Grande, where a dentist and fellow countryman offered to fix my teeth. Yesterday I returned from there and let me tell you — are my teeth in good shape!

I am now going to turn over the works to the publisher. But as time seems to fly with startling quickness, worried about what you might think of my obstinate silence, I decided to forget about surprsing you, and break my mute state by writing you so that you know of my whereabouts.

I am sending you, so that you won't die of anger, the originals of the works to be published so that you know I am a man of my word. Nevertheless, I have had to correct certain passages in the originals that I am going to give to the publisher. In closing, brother Pagolita, please forgive me. Don't be angry with me because of my failure to write you before this. You now know my innocent motives.

I'll see you soon. A thousand remembrances to your family and receive the unwavering affection of your friend and grateful brother.

Agustín Barrios



This letter confirms that prior to the year 1921 Barrios did not publish any of his compositions. I have collected only *Humoresque* (as well as *Minueto* in A) published by Carlos U. Trápani, Editor, 1325 Calle Convención, Montevideo. The *Minuet* is dedicated to Trápani and there is no year indicated for copyright. Perhaps Barrios was not able to publish all the works he had intended, or perhaps they were indeed published and have long since gone out of print. Around this time—the spring of 1921 (late September)—he wrote his marvelous study *Las Abejas* which was dedicated to Borda y Pagola.

On September 28 he departed for Buenos Aires, having evidently made contact with phonograph record producer Max Glucksman, who, as this letter dated October 15, 1921 to Borda y Pagola indicates, offered Barrios a contract to record over a five year period “five records per year”. This letter also describes Barrios’ initial meeting with Andrés Segovia:

Buenos Aires, October 15, 1921

Dear brother Martín:

Even though you won’t believe it, I am in Buenos Aires. I came to this city 18 days ago, contracted by Max Glucksman to record gramophone records, having already recorded a series of six discs corresponding to the present year, thus, I must tell you that I signed a contract with this firm, for which I am obligated over the next five years to record for them a minimum of 5 records per year. The series that I recorded, which are in the category of “select discs”, are one-sided of three minutes duration. The house pays me 25 pesos for the immediate work of recording (per disc, naturally) and 8 more for the stamping of each disc, 0.10 cents and more as composer royalty if I record my own works. In this series I recorded: *Página de Album*, *Vals No. 3*, *Canzoneta*, *Aires Criollos* and *Madrigal Gavota*. In my desire to finish these works, unfortunately I had to cut wherever possible the scores. Next Tuesday I have to go hear the proof copies and then I will let you know my impressions.

Beloved brother: taking advantage of my stay here I am going to give 2 or 3 concerts in *La Argentina*. With this in mind I must tell you the news that will be pleasing to you, that I have had the fortunate opportunity to hear Segovia in one of his concerts in the same *La Argentina* theatre. At that concert I was introduced to him by our good friend Elbio and now we are great friends. Some time later I went to visit him at his private residence accompanied by Elbio and Martín. He treated me with much consideration and kindness. I played



for him on his guitar some of my compositions which pleased him greatly. As a consequence of the sincere and open reception that Segovia has given me, I must tell you, brother, that I feel a great fondness for this great artist. I am enchanted with his way of playing and I try on the whole to imitate him, without losing, naturally my own personality. He showed particular interest for *La Catedral* and asked me to give it to him so he could play it in his concerts. I therefore ask you, Pagolita, to do me the great favor of sending me as soon as possible a copy of this composition, since Segovia is embarking for Europe on November 2. He encouraged me a great deal and told me that as soon as possible I should go to the old world. There wasn't the slightest hint of petulance between us. On the contrary, he made it clear that he felt for me a special esteem (which he had dispensed to very few professionals) as he saw in me much sincerity as an artist.

In closing, brother, now that I have conquered Segovia, it remains to conquer your friend Llobet. I forgot to tell you that Segovia promised to give me some of the works in his repertoire, among which figures a *Torre Bermeja*, of Albéniz, which is extremely precious.

Agustín Barrios

PS — My address is: México No. 353, Buenos Aires

I have some new works that seem to me very choice.

Did Barrios manage to give Segovia a copy of *La Catedral*? According to Klinger, he did: "Barrios played a cascade of musical gems for the great Segovia who was surprised...better yet: he was floored. Nearly 2 hours later he was congratulated by the Maestro. One particular work he liked very much and indicated he would play it in his concerts. Barrios gave him an original copy with a dedication. The work that Segovia said he would like to program in his concerts he never played. And logically so: if he had played it, with the extraordinary abilities he possessed he would have elevated Barrios to inaccessible heights, thus detracting from his own artistic prestige. Now, seeing the results of this famous encounter and with the advantage of hindsight, we can derive some interesting deductions. First off, given the elevated concept Segovia had of himself, totally justified, never would he suspect that Barrios would dare to present to him original works, offering them for his magnanimous judgment boldly and without mincing words and, above all, with confidence in their value. This self-confidence Barrios displayed exercised a powerful influence over Segovia, forcing him to pay attention. The rest was done by the enchantment of those beautiful works cloaked in a moving romanticism."



I tend to think that Barrios was a bit naive. He was a sincere, open kind of person. In time he would come to the realization that Segovia was not his friend nor his supporter. Many years later he declared that Segovia was "deaf in the heart".<sup>2</sup> In 1921 Segovia was just beginning to become famous (compared to the omnipotent position he would occupy in the world of concert guitar in subsequent decades) and obviously did not welcome any formal competition in his quest for recognition and success. If Segovia had been genuinely sincere in his professed approval of Barrios' music, he would have programmed *La Catedral*, as well as other pieces, and no doubt would have helped Barrios make his way to Europe to concertize. But, though they would meet at least once more, Segovia ignored Barrios and ultimately publicly criticized him as "not a good composer for the guitar".<sup>3</sup>



"To my good friend and future formidable rival, the intelligent student of the guitar, Quirino Baez Allende. Remembrance of your friend, A. Barrios, Buenos Aires, November 21, 1921." Quirino Baez Allende (1896–1963) was a professional classic guitarist from Paraguay who at the time of this photo was studying with Domingo Prat and who went on to a successful career, writing and arranging music that was published in Argentina and Brazil. He reputedly played in concert with Barrios in Buenos Aires (1921) and in Mexico (1939).



Three days after writing this letter to Borda y Pagola, Barrios gave on October 18 this concert at the *La Argentina* theatre:

- First Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. Clair de Lune—adagio (Beethoven)  
4. Romanza (Mendelssohn)  
5. Canzoneta (Mendelssohn)

- Second Part:** 1. Melody in F (Rubenstein)  
2. Nocturne (Chopin)  
3. Minuet (Tárrega)  
4. Andante (Sor)  
5. Tarantella (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne  
2. Danza en Re Menor (Barrios)  
3. Vals de Primavera (Barrios)  
4. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)  
5. Gran Jota (Barrios)

During the period from November 1921 until possibly June 1922 Barrios journeyed once again to Chile to play concerts in Santiago.<sup>4</sup> The impression he made this time must have been quite different from that of his first trip some ten years before!

By July of 1922 Barrios was in Porto Alegre, Brazil where he gave a concert, including his brother Martín. After this they returned to Paraguay, arriving on August 21. Finally Agustín had made it back home! He had an idea of settling down in his homeland, but he would soon come to realize that this was an impossibility.

Barrios returned to Paraguay a success. He had not amassed a great deal of money but nevertheless was viewed by the Paraguayan press as one of the world's great guitarists, being compared to Llobet and Segovia. Paraguayans had not heard him since 1909 and there was genuine curiosity and excitement surrounding his return. The Asunción daily *El Diario* of August 19, 1922, announcing his imminent return, informed:

According to the telegram we have received, tomorrow the famed Paraguayan guitarist Don Agustín Barrios, embarking from Corrientes with this capital as destination, accompanied by his brother Francisco Martín, returns to his homeland after



having realized a triumphant tour of the principal foreign countries, harvesting laurels for the fatherland and an enviable fame as an artist.

Our compatriot is seen by the critics as one of the best guitarists and our public which has always avidly desired to hear him will now have the opportunity in the presentations he plans to make in this city.

Four days after arriving Barrios offered for a select public the first of eleven concerts he would give in Asunción over the next 8 months. This was a time of seeing old friends, a time of welcoming for the artist from all those who knew him when he was just starting out and who were now justifiably proud of what he had accomplished: Gustavo Sosa Escalada, Nicolino Pellegrini, Viriato Diaz Perez—all had played a major role in his formation. On August 27 in the Teatro Belvedere he performed this program:

- First Part:** 1. Minuet (Sor)  
2. Romanza (Mendelssohn)  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. Tarantella (Barrios)

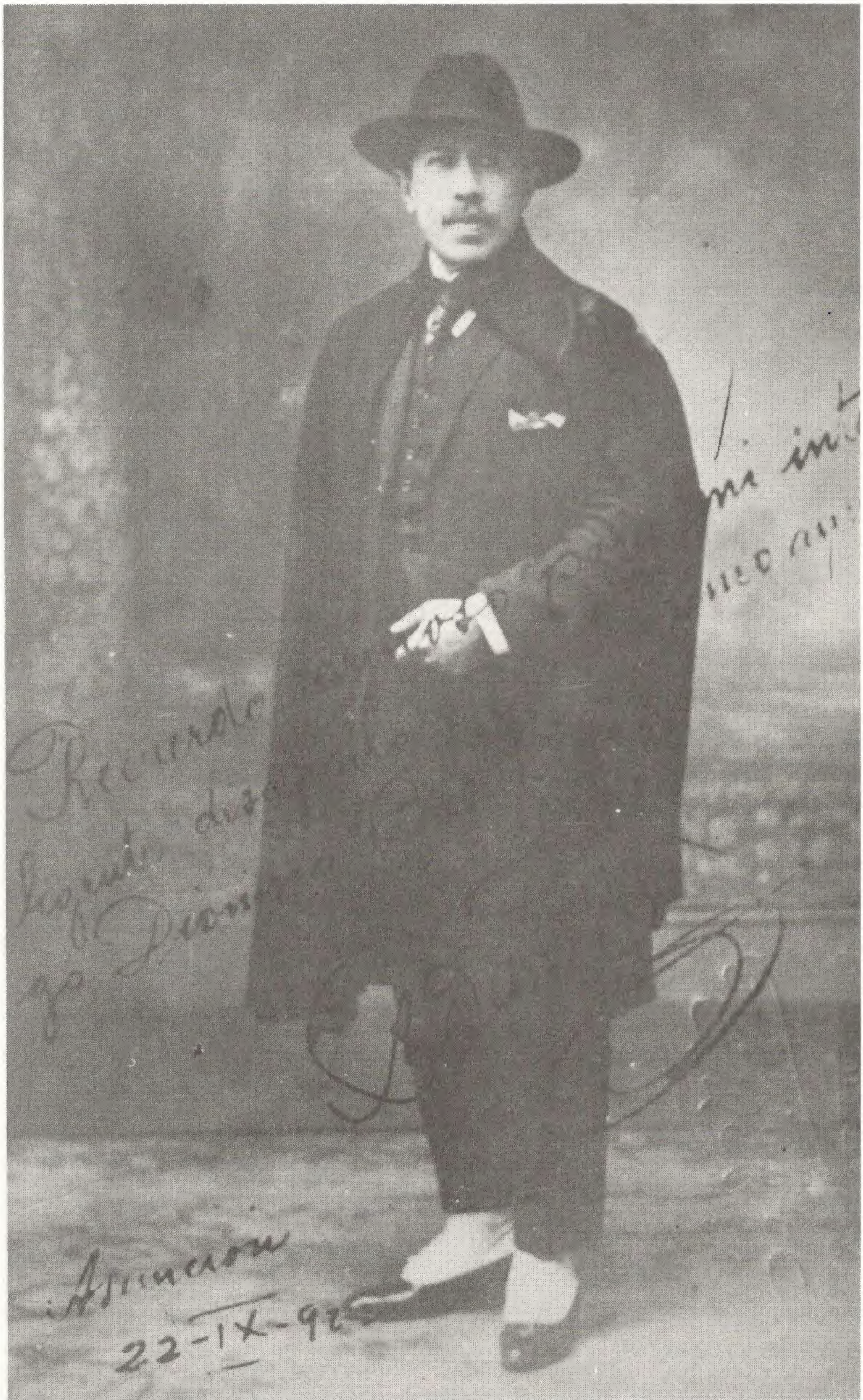
- Second Part:** 1. Granada (Albéniz)  
2. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
3. Nocturne (Chopin)  
4. Poutpurri-arreglo (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Danza Española No. 5 (Llobet-Granados)  
2. Aires Sudamericanos (Barrios)  
3. Souvenir d'un Reve (Barrios)  
4. Gran Jota (Barrios)

*Aires Sudamericanos* is quite possibly the piece *Aires Criollos* (or perhaps a new entry in his ever-expanding list of concert pieces). During these years he was adding new pieces to his repertoire quite rapidly and his output of original pieces was also quite substantial. In the two years that had passed since his arrival in Montevideo in June 1920, he had added to his already formidable repertoire at least twenty new pieces, nine of which were original works.

The review of this concert that appeared in *Patria* on August 28 states that Barrios, before beginning the first selection, "directed brief words to the auditorium declaring that he was recently returned to his homeland, after





"Warm remembrances for my intelligent disciple and beloved friend Dionisio Basualdo. Asunción, September 22, 1922."



securing to his satisfaction his reputation, today credited with worldwide fame: that the civil war saddened his soul as it disturbs the peaceful atmosphere and order necessary for the progress of the nation."

He was referring to political turmoil between two factions of the Radical Party (the *gondristas* opposing the *schaeristas*) that erupted into violence in May of 1922. The fighting was going on even as Barrios spoke these words and it lasted until July of the following year. It was a very difficult time in Paraguay.

Barrios did not disappoint his fellow countrymen. The reviewer in *El Liberal* of August 28, proclaimed:

Barrios is a source of national pride and a glory for America. Those who have heard the most famous guitarists of the day—Manjón, Tárrega, Llobet, García, Sagreras, Robledo, etc.—confirm that none of them reach the level of Barrios, in execution nor in sentiment. Argentine and Brazilian critics are unanimous in affirming this, and there is no other city in the world visited with regularity by the best guitarists as Buenos Aires.

The great merit of Barrios is accented, if one keeps in mind that he is self-taught. He learned from himself and because of himself, as his fatherland gave him nothing more than a basic education.

Barrios was the first native citizen to achieve a relative amount of fame outside Paraguay's borders and this fact was a certainty then as it is even more so today. Of the 59 years Barrios lived, he spent about 27 of them in Paraguay. Because of this fact Paraguay in some ways has a difficult time taking "all the credit", particularly when Paraguayans readily admit that Barrios received nothing more than "a basic education" from his homeland. Barrios was self-didactic in the sense that he did not receive a higher education in a conservatory or university. His knowledge of the guitar and of music in general was formed primarily through his own solitary and empirical efforts. The fact that he performed in nearly every Latin American nation makes him the first truly *Pan-American* concert artist in whom all Iberoamericans can take pride.

Four days later on August 31 in the same Teatro Belvedere he performed these works in concert:

- First Part:**
1. Clair du Lune—adagio (Beethoven)
  2. Serenata Española (Barrios)
  3. Vals de Concierto No. 2 (Barrios)
  4. Mozart Variations (Sor)



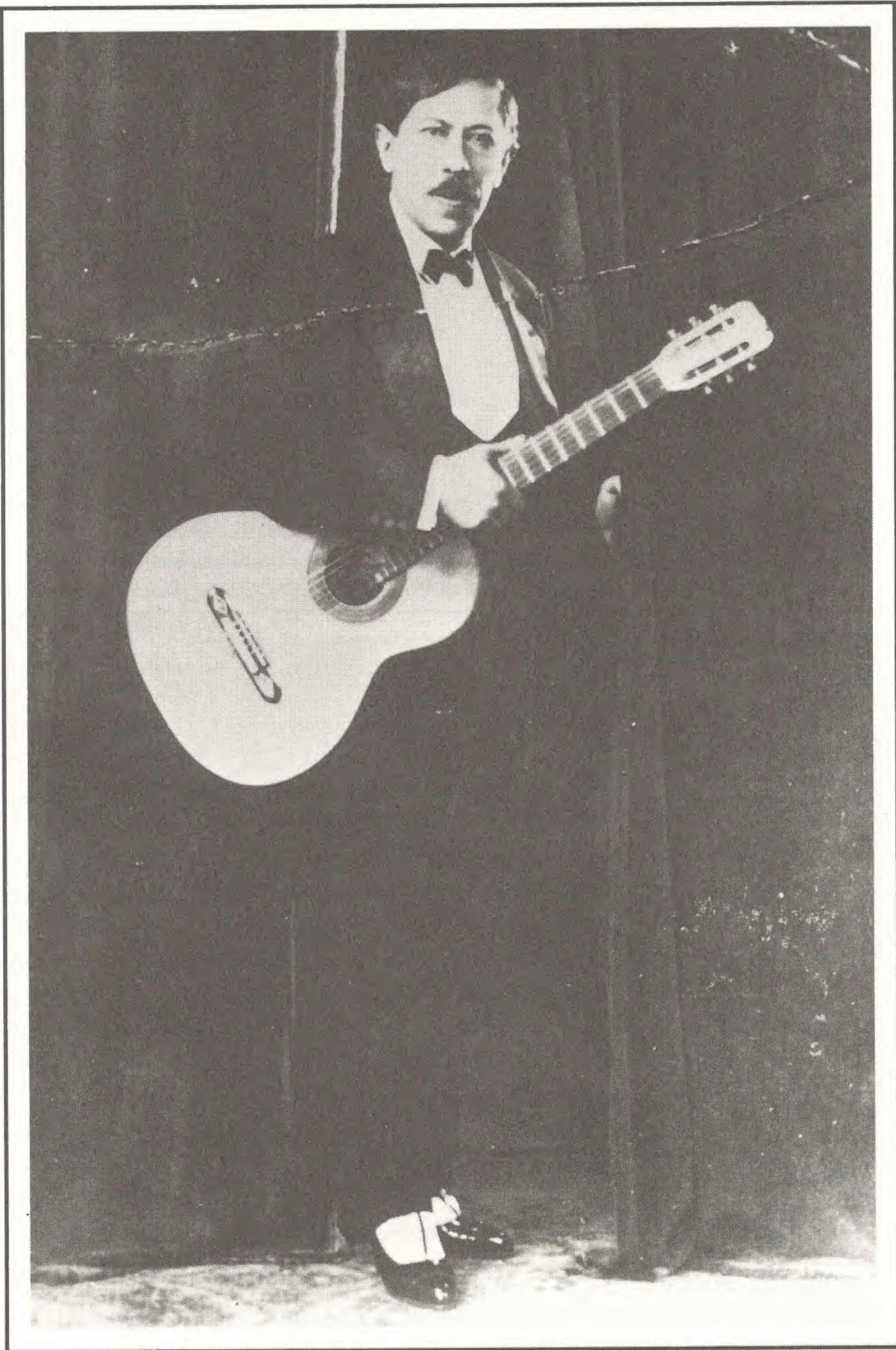


Barrios with the faculty of the Instituto Paraguayo, 1922.



A group of "Friends of the Guitar" with Barrios in Asunción in 1922. Seated on Barrios' right is Enriqueta Gonzalez, a formidable guitarist who recorded several records in Buenos Aires in the early 1930's. Seated on Agustín's left is brother Francisco Martín and to his left is Dionisio Basualdo.





Barrios in Asunción, 1923.



- Second Part:** 1. Tempo de Bourée (Bach)  
2. Cuento de Amor (Manjón)  
3. Mazurka Apassionata (Barrios)  
4. Minuet (Paderewsky)

- Third Part:** 1. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
2. Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)  
3. Danza en Re Menor (Barrios)  
4. Marcha Heróica (Barrios)

encore: Cerro Corá (Paraguayan melody)

*Sevilla* by Albéniz appears here for the first time as well as his *Vals No. 2* (which may be the waltz *Junto a tu Corazón* – of the reputed five waltzes that made up the so-called *Opus 8* only two – *Vals No. 3* and *No. 4* – are known). The encore is a popular song played by harpists and was but one of many Paraguayan airs that Barrios presented over the next few months.

Once again at the Teatro Belvedere on September 3 Barrios gave a concert which featured his *Madrigal Gavota* and *Capricho Español* as well as Aguado's *Rondo in A*, Schumann's *Berceuse*, Ponchielli's *Dance of the Hours* and two Paraguayan selections: *Campamento* and *Santa Fé* (partial listing given in *El Diario* of September 4, 1922).

Shortly after this concert Agustín and Martín journeyed northward to the town of Concepción to offer some performances. By September 15 they were back in Asunción and on the 17th they gave a concert at the Instituto Paraguayo. Publicity for this concert implied that it would be possibly the last Barrios would give in Paraguay "before leaving abroad." Whether he had at this time actually made up his mind to leave Paraguay and resume touring (after being back a little more than a month), or whether it was for expedient ends to insure a better turnout at this concert, no one can say.

- First Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
2. Chanson du Printemps (Mendelssohn)  
3. a) Two Preludes (Chopin)  
b) Nocturne (Chopin)  
4. Andante (Sor)

- Second Part:** 1. Danza Mora (Tárrega)  
2. Mazurka in G (Llobet)  
3. Estudio de Concierto (Coste)  
4. Lucia de Lammermoor–Finale (Donizetti)  
5. La Samaritana (Barrios)  
6. Capricho Español (Barrios)  
7. Vals No. 2 (Barrios)



8. Potpourri (Barrios)
9. Cielo Santa Fé (arr. Barrios)

As can be seen, Barrios continued to add to his repertoire: Donizetti, more Tárrega, Coste and Llobet plus a new original: *La Samaritana*. It is easy to understand the claim that Barrios studied 12 hours a day! He was apparently a fast learner and of robust physical strength with a phenomenal memory to sustain an extraordinary amount of hours dedicated to playing the guitar – such was the dynamic state of this young artist who had not yet lost any enthusiasm nor optimism for the future, displaying an almost superhuman ability to absorb as well as create new pieces of music.

On September 28 in the Granados Theatre and on October 29 at the Instituto Paraguayo Barrios offered concerts, the last including his brother Martín. On November 4 Martín presented his play *La Chispa Robada* in the Granados Theatre which featured Agustín performing the following works as a prelude to the dramatic stage play:

Gavota (Tárrega)  
Vals (Barrios)  
Humoresque (Barrios)  
Study in A Minor (Barrios)  
Leyenda Guaraní (Barrios)

This was followed by the Police Band directed by Nicolino Pellegrini playing several pieces “popular with the public.”

The piece *Leyenda Guaraní* was probably an initial version of what he would come to call *Diana Guaraní* years later. The *Study in A Minor* is not known and is perhaps one of the reputed *Eleven Concert Studies*.

Their next performance would be on January 1 in the Belvedere Theatre. Following this on January 13 the Barrios clan attempted an “open air” event at the Plaza Uruguay with a presentation of poetry (featuring not only Martín but also older brothers Hector and Virgilio reciting original poems) interlaced with Agustín’s playing. Evidently a great throng turned out for the event, causing a bit of confusion. The amount of noise from the crowd together with the lack of acoustics forced Agustín, after playing just two selections, realizing that the situation was out of hand, to suspend the function, refunding the money of those who had bought tickets for the event.

Barrios remained in Paraguay until April 26, 1923. Before departing he would play two more concerts: one at the Godoi Museum on April 10, at which an eloquent eulogy was delivered by Barrios’ old friend and meta-physical mentor Viriato Diaz Perez, and a very special concert with his teacher Gustavo Sosa Escalada on April 15:



### **First Part: Barrios**

1. Loure (Bach)
2. Vals No. 4 (Barrios)
3. Canción de Mi Madre (Barrios)
4. Mozart Variations (Sor)
5. Romanza in Imitation of the Cello (Barrios)
6. Jha Che Valle (Barrios)

### **Second Part: Sosa Escalada**

1. Gran Solo (Sor)
2. Preludio (Cano)
3. Zaida Mercedes-polonesa (Sosa Escalada)

### **Third Part: Barrios and Sosa Escalada**

1. Andante No. 8 (Cano)
2. Estudio de Concierto (Coste)
3. Aires Nacionales (arr. Barrios)
4. El Delirio (Arcas)

This I believe is the debut performance of one of his most popular pieces, *Vals No. 4*. Up until this point we have seen on his programs only *Vals No. 2* and *No. 3*. It is very probable that Barrios began composing this piece in the months before this concert as it is dedicated to his old and dear friend Dionisio Basualdo with whom he no doubt was spending a good deal of time since returning to Paraguay. This is also the first time the very popular polka *Jha Che Valle* is seen on any of his programs. This delightful, ebullient dance, which in Guaraní means something like "Oh My Homeland", is impregnated with popular feeling and is today still played with amazing frequency by guitarists in Paraguay.

One last and final concert was squeezed in on the evening of April 25 at the Granados Theatre where Martín's dramatic work *Sinforosa* was presented to a "numerous public". The following day Agustín, Martín and Sosa Escalada journeyed to Formosa, Argentina and gave some privately sponsored concerts for the owner of a large *estancia*.<sup>5</sup> After this Barrios headed downriver and would not return to Paraguay until a year and a half later.

He made his way to Rosario, Argentina to visit a friend, Don Baptiste Almirón (1879-1932), a well known teacher of the classic guitar, whose daughter Lalyta (b. 1914) was a prodigy on the instrument and who became one the better known concert guitarists in Argentina in the first half of the 20th century.<sup>6</sup> Barrios remained in Rosario approximately 5 months, staying in a hotel and eating dinner with the Almiróns almost every night, after which all would commence to play guitar till the wee hours. Barrios taught





Barrios, his brother Francisco Martín and Sosa Escalada in Formosa, Argentina, 1923.



Lalyta a number of his original pieces "face to face" — without writing them down on manuscript paper. Instead of going directly into Buenos Aires, he camped himself on the "outskirts" (Rosario is a day's journey northwest of Buenos Aires) in a smaller, calmer city surrounding himself with people who loved the guitar as much as he did.

Barrios had a high regard for nine year old Lalyta, and stated the following about her in Ricardo Muñoz's book *Historia de la Guitarra* (p. 406):

Anything that I can say about this young child, is little, compared to her enormous talent. The past year, in my tour of Andean cities I had the opportunity to listen to this little concert artist and composer (as you see Lalita D. Almirón's young mind has already conceived some original pages).

The impression I received upon seeing her with the instrument was that she seemed to be behind a counter, so huge did the guitar seem in relation to the little guitarist.

But my surprise had no limits when, as if it were the most natural thing in the world, with her lovely smile, she played *Study No. 22* of Coste and the *Canzoneta* of Mendelssohn. Works of challenge, even for masters, burst forth as enchanting art in a shower of crystalline notes from her agile fingers, which in giddy movements resemble hummingbirds over the strings. Contemplating this inconceivable phenomenon of artistic precocity, it was difficult not to think in the mystery of reincarnation.

And upon leaving I continued meditating how Nature works the miracle of placing in such a tender mind, all that which takes us a lifetime!

Lalita Almirón is not only a technician, but also an emotive being of fine and deep sensibility. It is truly moving to feel and watch this child, with her eyes full of tears, interpret a page of Chopin.

Lalyta Almirón was the only guitarist in Argentina who played the music of Barrios in concert in the decade of the twenties. On August 19 and 22, 1924 (about a year after Barrios left Rosario never to return again), Lalyta gave concerts at the *La Argentina* in Buenos Aires, in which she featured two works by Barrios: *Romance in Imitation of the Cello* and *Vals Scherzo No. 4*. She also performed in Rosario that year the gavotte *Lalita*, a piece Barrios wrote just for her. In future years she would perform many of his





This photo was dedicated to Baptiste Almirón in Rosario, Argentina, September 5, 1923. Looking closely, it is possible to see the small rubber dampers Barrios used on the treble strings of his guitar.



works, being one of the few “defenders” of Barrios in the decades of the thirties through the sixties. In 1949 she recorded *Contemplación* with orchestral accompaniment!<sup>7</sup>

The gifted child must have learned quickly, for in the 5 months that she had the great fortune to see Barrios almost daily, she learned, in addition to *Romance in Imitation of the Cello* and *Vals No. 4*, *Contemplación* plus an unidentified *Romanza in D* (which has never been found in manuscript but of which this writer has a taped performance by Lalyta).<sup>8</sup> The version that she plays of *Vals No. 4* has a completely different middle section and is obviously an early variant of the piece and differs from the version that Barrios would eventually record and publish (he must have still been working on it during this time).

This demonstrates how Barrios did indeed revise his works, in this case changing an entire section. Of his well known and much appreciated *Danza Paraguaya* there have surfaced at least 6 different treatments in addition to a version for two guitars. In essence I have no doubt that for Barrios “music” was *not* what was written on paper. “Music” was a mystical act, a state of being, a way of life, a key to relating to your fellowman. This explains Barrios’ lack of regard for “writing everything down” and his constant penchant for improvising and revising his works. He was a romantic who saw his life as a pilgrimage in the service of True Art. Barrios’ values and his views of what it means to “be alive” were such that he resulted as a person who “lived the moment” and didn’t spend a lot of time theorizing about tomorrow. Extremely emotional and sensitive, he was by nature “in the ever present now” that Zen teaches. Though he undoubtedly paid the price for being this way, he could probably not have been any other way without ceasing to be the creative genius that he was.

The five months that Barrios spent in Rosario were obviously dedicated to composing new works, for a little over a month later, after bidding goodbye to the Almiróns, Barrios gave on October 24 in the *La Argentina* theatre in Buenos Aires the first of three announced concerts comprised entirely of original works:

- First Part:**
1. Minuet in A
  2. Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello
  3. Danza en Re Menor
  4. Vals Brillante (no.4)



- Second Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca  
 2. Madrigal Gavota  
 3. Dos Estudios:  
     a) Las Abejas  
     b) Arabescos  
 4. Aires Sudamericanos

- Third Part:** 1. Habanera  
 2. Mazurka Apasionata  
 3. Contemplación  
 4. Gran Jota

This is the first appearance of the study *Arabescos* and what very well could be the debut concert performance of *Las Abejas*. Two more concerts, planned for November 6 and 8, were evidently canceled due to lack of public. Had he been able to realize the remaining two concerts, he would have performed these works:

- First Part:** 1. Minueto in D  
 2. Aire de Zamba  
 3. Vals de Primavera  
 4. Leyenda Guaraní

- Second Part:** 1. Oración de la Tarde  
 2. Confesión  
 3. Two Paraguayan Airs:  
     a) Nderesá porá (To Your Beautiful Eyes)  
     b) Rojhechaga-ú (Nostalgia)  
 4. Capricho Español

- Third Part:** 1. La Samaritana  
 2. Estudio de Concierto  
 3. Souvenir d'un Rêve  
 4. Marcha Heróica

- First Part:** 1. El Hijo Pródigo  
 2. Minuet in E  
 3. Vals No. 3  
 4. La Catedral  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne



- Second Part:** 1. A Mi Madre  
2. Dos Estudios:  
a) Cajita de Música  
b) La Calesita  
3. El Arroyo (romanza)  
4. Tarantela

- Third Part:** 1. Danza Macabra  
2. Aire Paraguayo  
3. Trémolo  
4. Allegro Sinfónico

Guitarra: José Ramirez

A total of 38 works are listed. The time he spent in Rosario was evidently quite productive as 17 of these works were created during the five month period he spent there prior to this October concert! Numerous witnesses testify to the fact that when Barrios composed, he liked to be left completely alone, even shut up within a room, with no interruptions. He was able to do this during his months in Rosario, spending days in his hotel room creating, and evenings in company of the Almirón family playing music.

That two of the concerts were cancelled must have been a great disappointment. The cumulative effect that artists like Llobet and Segovia had on the guitar public of Buenos Aires was beginning to manifest itself as a tendency to look to Europe for "the new repertoire", giving little attention to "American music". But the years 1922-23 must be viewed as perhaps Barrios' greatest period of creativity, giving birth to over 20 new original works.

The one concert that he was able to give on October 24 was reviewed two months later in the December edition of *La Guitarra*, a magazine published in Buenos Aires by Juan C. Anido, the father of María Luisa Anido (b. 1907). His priorities were with Miguel Llobet and his daughter, and he had nothing good to say about Barrios:

### AGUSTÍN BARRIOS

Señor Agustín Barrios had announced three concerts in La Argentina, of which he only realized one.

The distinguished Paraguayan guitarist has thus had little good fortune.

And this is due, in great part, to the modern artistic concept of guitar that exists in our public.



Barrios, who presents himself simultaneously as player, composer and folklorist, is not, in reality, a true exponent of any of these three abilities.

As a guitarist he is not entirely devoid of interest, possessing a certain temperament, but in no way can he be considered among the top concert guitarists, due to an innovation that he claims to have introduced to the guitaristic art.

This innovation consists in substituting the treble strings, which on the classic guitar are made of gut, for those made of steel wire. But Señor Barrios, upon incurring such a grave fault against artistic culture and good taste, cannot even take credit for what he claims to be a novelty: the unfortunate modification is used by Italian "tocadores" (common "street" guitarists), and by the majority of popular players.

As a composer, Sr. Barrios does not offer outstanding qualities. It cannot even remotely be claimed that his works form part of the good repertoire for guitar. They lack musical value and originality.

Alongside limited short flashes of ideas of relative interest, there appear extremely vulgar periods prolonged to excess.

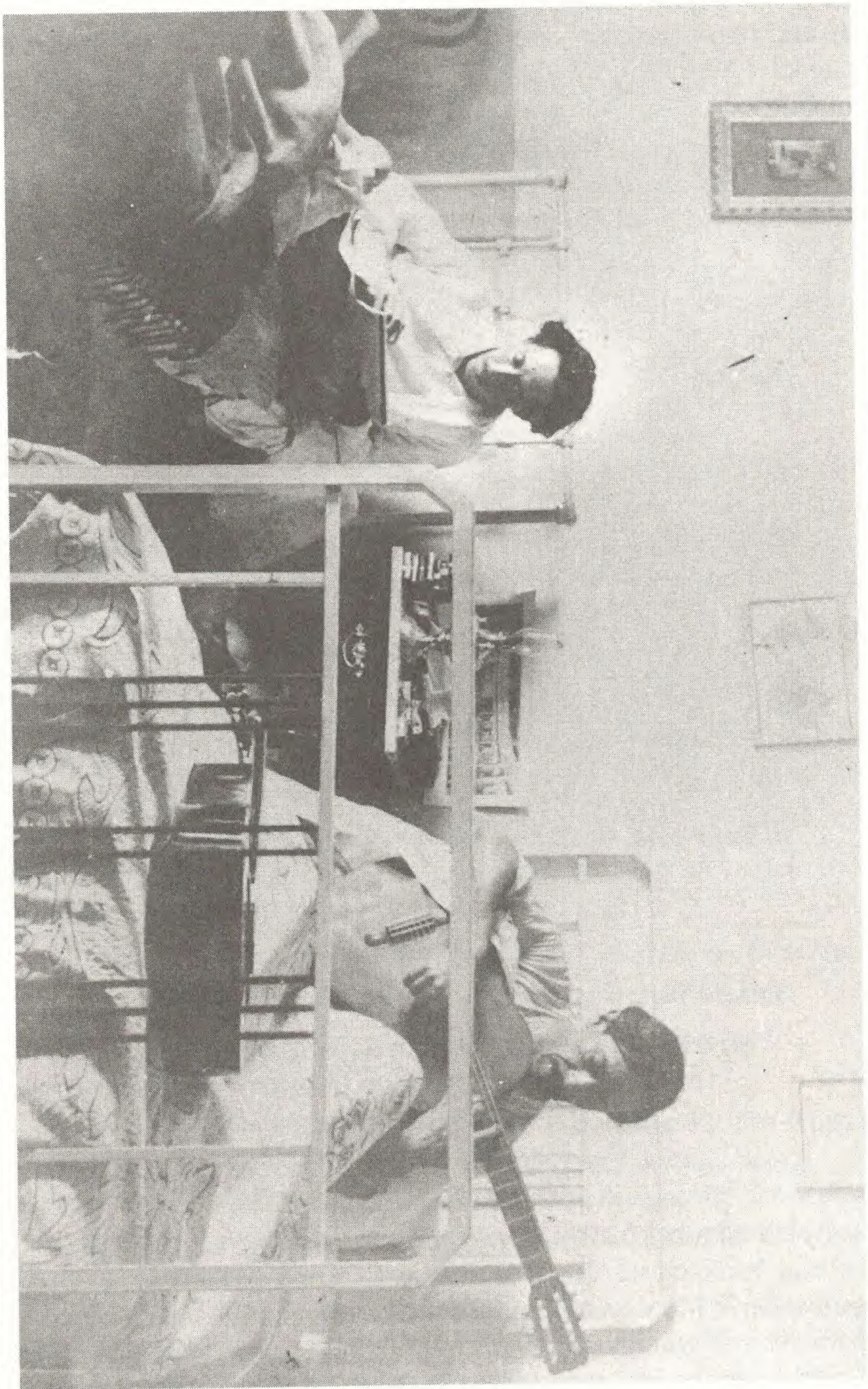
And as a folklorist, we think that the Iberoamerican songbook must await another investigator of greater substance and knowledge.

All that is written here does not pretend, in the least, to indicate a lack of innate qualities in Sr. Barrios: rather that such qualities are wasted if they are not backed up with superior preparation.

This scathing review I always find amusing simply because time has proven Sr. Anido completely inaccurate in his highly biased judgment of Barrios. Anido's criticism of Barrios' compositional abilities is superficial. Barrios may not have been an "academic folklorist" but the works he produced based on folklore — estilo, choro, cueca, maxixe, milonga, zamba, pericón, polka, etc. — are wonderful fusions of folk rhythm, classical harmony and guitar technique that no guitarist of his day equaled, including Anido's daughter María Luisa (who many years later would play in concert as well as record on two separate occasions Barrios' *Danza Paraguaya* and publicly praise Barrios as a "great master").

But the tide of the guitar public's opinion was changing and running against Barrios. No one played on metal strings...no one. As this world of classic guitar in Buenos Aires grew and refined itself, metal strings were





Late risers Martín and Agustín, each practicing his art, circa 1924. No doubt a very typical scene of the many years they were together on tour, sharing a hotel room.



totally rejected and newer aesthetic currents in music, such as impressionism and neo-classicism, were coming to be viewed as the proper direction in which future repertoire should move.

Barrios left Buenos Aires and returned to Uruguay where on November 22 and 23 he gave concerts in Minas with the violinist Eduardo Fabini:

- First Part:** 1. Loure (Bach)—guitar solo  
2. Capricho Español (Barrios)—guitar solo  
3. The Swan (Saint Saens)—duo  
4. Serenata (Dríla)—duo

- Second Part:** 1. Aire de Zamba (Barrios)—guitar solo  
2. Minuet (Paderewsky)—guitar solo  
3. Reverie (Schumann)—duo  
4. Song of Love (Kreisler)—duo

- Third Part:** 1. Contemplación (Barrios)—guitar solo  
2. Rapsodia Americana (Barrios)—guitar solo  
3. a) Siciliana (Francoeur)—duo  
b) Rigodón (Francoeur)—duo  
4. Carnaval of Venice (Paganini)—duo

The next day they gave another concert, this time including Martín Barrios reciting some of his poetry:

- First Part:** 1. Minuet (Beethoven)—guitar solo  
2. Mozart Variations (Sor)—guitar solo  
3. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)—duo  
4. Waltz (Kreisler)—duo

**Second Part:** Poems by Francisco Martín Barrios

- Third Part:** 1. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)—guitar solo  
2. Pot-Pourri Lírico (Barrios)—guitar solo  
3. The Swan (Saint Saens)—duo  
4. Mazurca (Segura)—duo  
5. Zapateado (Sarasate)—duo

By December 1923 the Barrios brothers were in southern Brazil, but civil war had broken out there and they returned to Uruguay. They based themselves in Montevideo and for the balance of the year played concerts whenever and wherever they could find them. Barrios spent time at Borda y Pagola's ranch in Cerro de las Cuentas, composing the piece *Fabiniana* (an "Improvisation remembering Eduardo Fabini") on April 24, 1924. A





Barrios and Martín Borda y Pagola at his ranch in Cerro de las Cuentas, Uruguay, circa 1925.

manuscript of *Las Abejas* bears the inscription "Autograph for the musical album of my noble friend Rómulo Bonilla, Montevideo, June 6, 1924".

Below is a letter, dated May 25, 1924, that reveals Barrios' plans to return once again to Paraguay. His economic condition had not changed from past years:

Dear Pagolita:

I presume that at this time you now find yourself in your little house surrounded by your loving family which, without a doubt, is for you a treasure a thousand times more precious than Rockefeller's millions. Dear brother! in this time in



which winter's harshness begins to make us tremble, why does one desire to be out in open country, making it necessary to possess as you do a home warmed by the affection of a good wife and the filial love of plethoric children? Thus the most severe winter is converted into perpetual spring, and one's soul feels constantly the return of illusions of youth and love of life. Don't you think so brother? I, who do not have yet a nest in which to warm my bohemian bones, which life is beginning to chill little by little, must do a lot of gymnastics and take cold showers so that the desired reaction is produced...But I am optimistic, and that is enough to enable me to endure my celibacy until Heaven declares otherwise...

Beloved brother: I have promised Don Luís, before I leave for Paraguay, to give him a pig so that his wife, Doña Guillermina, who is very good at preparing pork chorizo sausages, can give me a few to take home to my mother. I ask that you procure for me as quickly as possible a pig and send it to me, butchered, of course.

As I do not have any money, you might say flat broke, I propose to repay you in three installments: late, bad and never. How does that strike you? I think it is an arrangement with which both of us can be comfortable.

This request I make of you will perhaps be a sacrifice for you, but what the heck, brother, as Fierro said it:

My good friend, for suffering  
Have men been born  
These are the times  
When a man must be strong  
Until death comes  
To take him with blows on the head.

Seriously, though: please write me, Pagolita, and let me know what the cost of the pig is, and I will pay whatever it is, ok? In the next week I am not exactly sure when I will depart for Buenos Aires, to record 6 records for Glucksman House. I shall spend two days at least, and return to prepare my trip to Paraguay. I hope that you, Dionisia, and Chinita as well as your relatives continue in good health. Here we are all ok, except that the cold weather is beginning to be a bit bothersome. I would imagine that there the temperature is begin-





Barrios with Dr. Miguel Lite de Oliva (seated) and Luís Durañona, Barrios' secretary for many years in Uruguay.



ning to drop considerably. The Durañona family sends its greetings together with a strong and fraternal embrace from your grateful friend.

Agustín Barrios

In August 1924 they were back in Paraguay. In the magazine *Olimpo* of September Barrios made the following brief comments on Paraguayan music:

Paraguayan music needs statutes of artistic nobility to triumph in the centers of civilization of the world. Our national musicians should impose upon themselves the patriotic duty of working the beautiful native airs, setting them in new forms, in order to rescue them from the primitive and routine terrain in which they are debated.

At around this time Barrios made a petition to the government to establish a music school. As mentioned above, Paraguay had undergone a protracted period of civil war in 1922-23 and this, together with the fact that Barrios did indeed have his "enemies" (his political leanings were reputedly toward the Colorado Party which was in opposition to the Radical Liberal Party then in power). This made for a speedy negation of his request. Barrios was indeed tired of a life of constant travel and his hopes for settling down in his homeland were now completely abandoned. "In 1924 the friends of Agustín Barrios noted in him a certain reserve that was not present in 1923 nor in 1922. Before 1924 it was inconceivable, due to the jovial character of the artist, that he would excuse himself from invitations. Friends attributed this to some kind of physical depression, a side effect of his considerable guitaristic activity together with his material poverty." Obviously he was beginning to realize that for him there would be no "permanent place" in his beloved Paraguay; that he was, as he decried in his famous sonnet *Bohemio*, "afloat moving with the impulses of destiny, dancing in a crazy whirlwind toward the four winds of the planet."

Agustín and Martín set to work securing some concerts, and on November 7 they gave three concerts in the remote town of Pilar in the south (very near where their mother Martina was born). On November 15 they gave a concert in the Asunción barrio Tuyucuá:

- First Part:**
1. Fantasía, Imitación al Piano (Viñas)
  2. Aconquija-aires típicos andinos (Barrios)
  3. Jha Che Valle (Barrios)
  4. Cielito Santa Fe—popular (Arr. Barrios)
  5. The Soul of My City—poem by F.M. Barrios



- Second Part:** 1. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
2. Vals No. 2 (Barrios)  
3. Aires Americanos (Barrios)  
4. Our Little House—poem by F.M. Barrios

- Third Part:** 1. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)  
2. Marcha Paraguaya (E. Pinho)  
3. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)  
4. Recitations in Guaraní—F.M. Barrios

Here is seen for the first time *Aconquija* (also known as *Aire de Quena*). The opening melody is supposedly based on Barrios' hearing a similar melody played on the quena (a reed or bone flute which is an integral component of Andean altiplano music). "Aconquija" is the name of a mountain in the Andes. This concert was so successful that another was quickly organized and carried out on November 22 in the same barrio:

- First Part:** 1. National Anthem  
2. Rapsodia Española (Barrios)  
3. Mamá Kumandá (Barrios)  
4. To A Paraguayan Lass—poem by F.M. Barrios
- Second Part:** 1. Miserere from El Trovador (Verdi)  
2. Vals de Concierto (Barrios)  
3. Londón Carapé-popular  
4. Episodes of a Correntino—poem by F.M. Barrios
- Third Part:** 1. Minuet (Paderewsky)  
2. Potpourri of National Polkas (Barrios)  
3. Variations on el Campamento (Barrios)  
4. Epác-mí (Guaraní)—poem by F.M. Barrios

Eight days later on November 30 they gave yet another performance at the Colegio Salesiano in the Vista Alegre area of Asunción:

- First Part:** 1. National Anthem  
2. Scherzo (Coste)  
3. Neike los Cuñá (Barrios)  
4. Listening to Beethoven—poem by F.M. Barrios
- Second Part:** 1. Cádiz (Albéniz)  
2. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
3. Mamá Cumandá—popular (Arr. Barrios)  
4. The Last Letter—poem by F.M. Barrios



- Third Part:** 1. A Mi Madre-habanera (Barrios)  
2. Pericón "Por María" (Podestá)  
3. Mosaic of National Airs (Barrios)  
4. Episodes of a Correntino – poem by F.M. Barrios

In December they undertook a tour by train of numerous Paraguayan towns, playing in Ypacaraí, Paraguarí, Carapeguá and Villarrica. The last concert they would give occurred on February 6, 1925 in the Colegio Monseñor Lasagna in Asunción:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Española (Parga)  
2. Scherzo (Coste)  
3. Vals de Concierto (Barrios)  
4. Variations on Campamento Cerro León (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Dance of the Hours (Ponchielli-Borda)  
2. Chopí-Danza Nacional (popular)  
3. The Anonymous Heroine – poem by F.M. Barrios  
4. Niño Ara (Guaraní) – poem by F.M Barrios

- Third Part:** 1. Leyenda de España (Barrios)  
2. National Airs (popular)  
3. Insomnia – poem by F.M Barrios  
4. Promise of a Correntino to the Virgin of Caacupé (Guaraní) – poem by F.M. Barrios

Not long after this a group of students asked Barrios to play a benefit concert for the Student Center in Asunción. But when the students went looking for an adequate auditorium in which to hold the event, they were turned down everywhere. One of the students at that time involved with organizing the event, Dr. Amadeo Baez Allende, years later in 1975 had the following recollections of the events surrounding what was Barrios' last performance in Paraguay:

Señor Barrios was very gratified to receive a visit from such a select group of Paraguayan youth and when we expressed the reason for our coming to him, he responded: "I cannot deny the wishes of you young people and it would be for me an enormous satisfaction to be able to accommodate your youthful concerns. I am at your service, just tell me the date and locale."



We obtained an interview with the President of the Ateneo, Dr. Don Juan Francisco Recalde, at which all of the members of the Student Center were present and with the euphoria of youth, we explained our desire to obtain use of the Ateneo's facilities to hold a guitar concert which the renowned guitarist Barrios would dedicate to the students. We were surprised to hear Dr. Recalde's negative reply expressed in an angry tone: "This is nothing but a popular guitarist, who does not know music and who has no place in these confines of culture"—adding some more unmentionable words. We left quite surprised by the violent reaction of Dr. Recalde, and today we know the reason why: Agustín Barrios was of the Colorado political ideology.

As stated above, even though he was not active in politics to any degree, he had made some enemies simply because of his political orientation. Paraguay was closed to him. None of the concerts he gave during this time were held in any of the major theatres of downtown Asunción because he and his brother had in effect been "blacklisted". What could be done? When told of the problem, Barrios replied: "I knew you wouldn't find a locale, so I propose that we have the concert in the Plaza Uruguaya." Perhaps he was thinking of two years earlier when he attempted an "open air" event in this same plaza that failed due to the excessive attendance by the public. At any rate, the concert was carried out with the collaboration of his friend, the guitarist Dionisio Basualdo. "The event was a success, as much for its quality as for the size of the public turnout. At the end Barrios read his famous sonnet *Bohemio*, which turned out to be his final goodbye to Paraguay."

In early February the Barrios brothers made a quick tour of local towns Barrero Grande, Caragatoy and Mbuyapey. Barrios remained in Asunción until at least February 28.<sup>9</sup> He then returned to Uruguay and by May he was in Salto staying with his friend Luis Pasquet. He reputedly based himself in Salto for approximately a year. Six months later he gave two concerts at the Teatro Solís in Montevideo:

October 17, 1925

- First Part:** 1. Andante (Mozart)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. Scherzo (Coste)  
4. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne



- Second Part:** 1. a) Sarabande (Bach)  
b) Prelude (Bach)  
2. Romanza (Mendelssohn)  
3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
4. Capricho Español (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
2. Reverie (Schumann-Borda y Pagola)  
3. Two Typical Andean Airs: (Barrios)  
a) Zamba  
b) Aconquija  
4. Variations on Campamento Cerro León  
(traditional patriotic Paraguayan song  
arranged by Barrios)

October 18, 1925

- First part:** 1. Chorale (Haendel)  
2. Minuet (Sor)  
3. Loure (Bach)  
4. Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello  
(Barrios)  
5. Mozart Variations (Sor)

- Second Part:** 1. Preludio (Barrios)  
2. Scherzo-vals (Barrios)  
3. Nocturne (Chopin)  
4. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)  
5. Souvenir D'un Rêve (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Danza Mora (Tárrega)  
2. Granada (Albéniz)  
3. Four South American Airs: (Barrios)  
a) Triste  
b) Cueca  
c) Salteñita  
d) Aire Brasileiro  
4. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)

The selection *Salteñita* is a new entry and this is the only program on which it appears. It could possibly refer to the town of Salto in Uruguay, or perhaps the northern Argentine city of Salta, and means "Little Lass from Salto" ( or Salta).



Barrios remained in Uruguay during 1926 where he continued to play concerts in the towns of the interior. His friend Borda y Pagola continued to aid him. A letter Barrios wrote to him during this time describes a typical performance in the town of Cerro Chato:

Cerro Chato

January 25, 1926

My dear unforgettable brother Pagolita:

At this moment, 8 in the evening, my artistic performance in Cerro Chato is finished and with great pleasure I take my pen to write you. My two concerts in the social club of this locality were a notable artistic success with good financial result. This could have been better, the gate did not reach the sum that we had hoped for, due, no doubt, to local circumstances, I'll tell you, as only about 50 tickets were sold in advance. But there were tickets sold at the door, and this resulted in both recitals producing about 160 pesos, which surely does not imply a failure, don't you think so? The first evening was extremely hot, having cooled off yesterday, due to the fact that some rain fell on the afternoon of the first concert. Undoubtedly Cerro Chato has prospered. The concerts had a select public and they listened well, at least better than the public of Fraile Muerto heard me. I believe I have left here very warm memories, a fact which will no doubt satisfy you, beloved brother, seeing as you were the one who initiated these artistic festivals.

As far as Egidio and his señora are concerned, I cannot say other than that they have gone out of their way to make my stay in their house a pleasant one. They put me in the best room of their hotel, which is very well organized and serviced and I'll tell you also that they had prepared two beds, believing you would be coming with me. But when they saw me arrive alone, great was their disappointment. Moreso for Egidio, who holds a brotherly affection for you, and who has not been able to console himself because of your absence. The poor fellow did what was in his power for the success of my concerts, taking time off from running his hotel and I must say that I owe not only him but his kind wife Otilia, who lavished attentions on me, a great debt of gratitude.

I was saying, brother, that I have finished my performances here because, as there is no train today for Montevideo, Egidio's parents-in-law invited me to an intimate party in their country house situated in a picturesque locale nearby, a splendid get together that took place at 6 in the evening, with an



enchancing feminine contingent, and a congenial autumn temperature, in which great enthusiasm and affectionate cordiality reigned. Needless to say, my "Ramirez" made the artistic-musical payment; the ladies provided the grace and the hosts of the house made the real payments, as their kindness extended to a table of pastries, topping it off with a bottle of champagne. A memorable evening.

Good brother, that sums up my stay in Cerro Chato. Tomorrow I will depart for Montevideo, at about 9:30 or 10 in the morning. From the bottom of my heart I tell you, that I miss the silent enchantment of your little ranch, where within its loving atmosphere, I have passed in your brotherly company hours of true happiness.

Until I see you soon, dear brother, I send my loving remembrances to you and your family in your beloved little ranch, and please receive the strongest hug from your brother always.

A. Barrios

Brother: I forgot to mention that Egidio and his wife were so generous with me that they did not charge me one cent for the days I stayed in their home — may God repay them.

At some point in 1927 he moved his focus of activity to Argentina where on November 15 and 17 he gave two concerts at the Teatro Urquiza in Entre Rios, Argentina:

**November 15, 1927**

- First Part:** 1. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
2. Romanza sin Palabras-imitación violoncello (Barrios)  
3. Diana Histórica Paraguaya (Dupuy)  
4. Tarantella (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Preludio (Barrios)  
2. Loure (Bach)  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. Nocturne (Chopin)  
5. Armonías de America-poema nativo (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
2. Contemplación (Barrios)  
3. Two Andean Airs (harmonized by Barrios)  
a) Aconquija  
b) Triste  
4. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)



The author of the piece *Diana Histórica Paraguaya* is listed as Dupuy. This probably refers to Francisco Sauvageot de Dupuis, a French musician and band leader who arrived in Paraguay in 1853 and who, according to Boettner, left no known original works. As early as 1913 Barrios recorded a piece called *Marcha Paraguaya* and credited it to Dupuy. Perhaps Barrios was hesitant at this time in taking credit for this initial version of what would become his most popular piece with concert audiences – *Diana Guaraní*. The piece *Leyenda Guaraní* (appearing for the first time in 1922) may be the earliest version of *Diana Guaraní*, which he also titled *Diana Paraguaya* (1928), *Alvorada Histórica Paraguaya* (1929), *Alvorada Guarany* (1930), and *Alvorada Histórica Guarany* (1931) before permanently settling on *Diana Guaraní* (in Martinique in December of 1931).

November 17, 1927

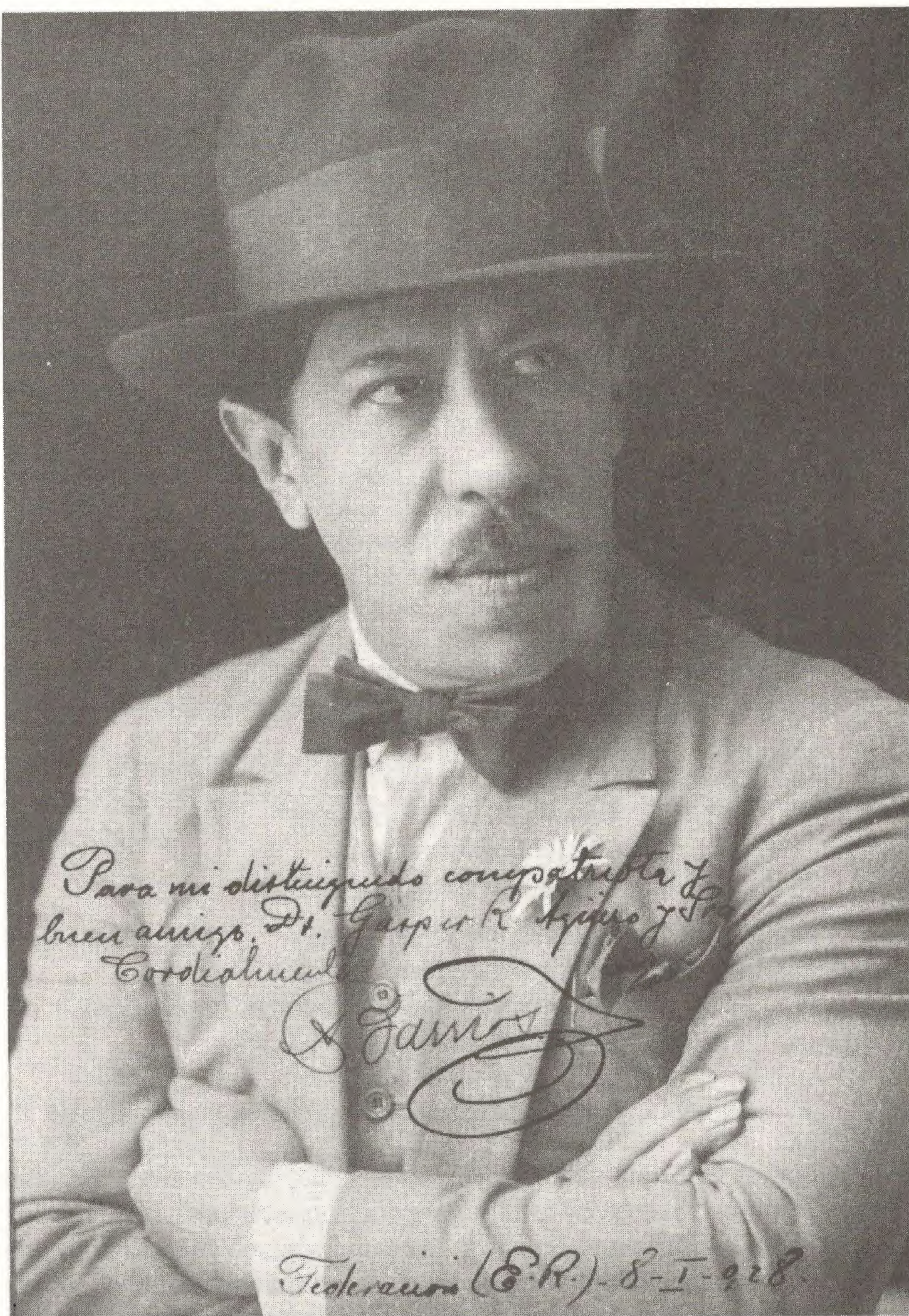
- First Part:** 1. Reverie (Schumann-Borda)  
 2. Mazurka Apasionada (Barrios)  
 3. Serenata Morisca (Parga)  
 4. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne

- Second Part:** 1. Scherzo (Coste)  
 2. Gavota Madrigal (Barrios)  
 3. Minuet (Paderewsky)  
 4. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Granada (Albéniz)  
 2. Vals Brillante (Barrios)  
 3. Two Andean Airs (harmonized by Barrios)  
     a) Cordobesa  
     b) Cueca  
 4. Capricho Español (Barrios)

*Cordobesa* is a new selection which is probably the piece *Córdoba*. Borda y Pagola is given credit for the transcription of *Reverie* by Schumann. Sila Godoy asserts this version of the Schumann piece (with the 6th string tuned to a low C) was in fact done by Barrios and that he credited it (as well as a few other selections) to Borda y Pagola simply to please his good friend and supporter. The *Vals Brillante* is *Vals No. 4*. Comparing these two programs with those given in 1925, it appears that little new repertoire has been added over the ensuing two years. Barrios was “slowing down” somewhat from the intense pace of creativity that he had established during the years 1918 through 1924. He possibly may have begun suffering a diminution in his health if indeed he had by this time contracted syphilis





This is the only photo showing Barrios' right hand nails. They appear to be quite strong (they must have been so to sustain playing on steel strings constantly), slightly curved and not particularly long. The caption reads: "To my distinguished compatriot and good friend, Dr. Gaspar Agüero and family. Cordially, A. Barrios, Federación, Entre Rios (Argentina), January 1, 1928."



(which was supposedly a factor in his demise 17 years later). Or perhaps he gradually sustained a loss of enthusiasm and lacked the intense motivation he displayed eight years earlier when he first arrived in Uruguay.

He remained in Entre Rios, Argentina until early 1928. By April he was back in Buenos Aires. According to records located at Odeon Industries in Buenos Aires, he commenced recording sessions on April 17 and recorded over the next four months twenty four selections, the last session occurring on August 1.<sup>10</sup>

On June 7 he gave this concert at *La Argentina* which featured the recently composed *País de Abanico*:

- First Part:** 1. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
2. Loure (Bach)  
3. Scherzo (Coste)  
4. Allegro Brillante (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)  
2. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
3. a) Romanza (Barrios)  
b) País de Abanico (Barrios)  
c) Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Nocturne (Chopin)  
2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne  
3. Aconquija-Suite Andina (Barrios)  
4. Capricho Español (Barrios)

This is the first mention of a *Suite Andina* ("Andean Suite") which in addition to *Aconquija* supposedly included the *Cueca*, *Aire de Zamba* and *Córdoba*. This so called suite has not been seen as such on any program – it is only referred to (as is the case here with *Aconquija*).

On June 18, 1928 Barrios was interviewed by Alfredo Quelu in the magazine *La Revista Semanal*. In this short but lively article, Barrios reveals, perhaps with tongue in cheek, that "between the study of human bones – my father wanted me to be a doctor – and arpeggios on the guitar, I preferred the latter. With the first you help your fellows to die badly, and with the second, on the other hand, you help them to live well. Don't you think my preferences are justified?"

On June 20 he gave the following program again in the theater *La Argentina*:



- First Part:** 1. Andante (Mozart)  
 2. a) Mazurka (Tárrega)  
       b) Minueto (Tárrega)  
 3. a) Confesión (Barrios)  
       b) Tarantella (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
 2. Gavotte (Bach)  
 3. Claire du Lune—adagio (Beethoven)  
 4. a) Cueca (Barrios)  
       b) Pericón (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Asturias (Albéniz)  
 2. Preludio (Barrios)  
 3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
 4. Diana Paraguaya (Barrios)

This is the first time the magnificent piece *Pericón* appears. *Diana Paraguaya* again must be yet another name for *Diana Guaraní*. Three weeks later on July 7 he offered a concert comprised entirely of original works:

- First Part:** 1. Madrigal Gavota  
 2. Minuet in B Major  
 3. Vals No. 3  
 4. Armonías de America

- Second Part:** 1. Oración de la Tarde  
 2. Mazurka Apasionada  
 3. Danza en Re Menor  
 4. Romanza  
 5. Souvenir d'un Rêve

- Third Part:** 1. Dos Estudios  
 2. Aire Paraguayo  
 3. Aire de Zamba  
 4. Gran Jota Aragonesa

*Oración de la Tarde* is probably either the piece *Oración* or perhaps *Oración por Todos*. The *Aire Paraguayo* is no doubt Barrios' arrangement of the Paraguayan song *Caazapá*. His majestic *Minuet in B Major* is seen here for the first time. This concert, according to Savio, was attended by a "scarce public; announcing a second concert, it is cancelled due to lack of public." Savio continues: "On this occasion I happened to be in the salon 'Argentina' and I accompanied Barrios to the Hotel Madrid, where he was



staying, and he was kind enough to play guitar, until 11 that evening. This was the last time I would see him 'eye to eye'. Disgusted with his failure he vowed never to return to Argentina again."

The guitar public of Buenos Aires had now more-or-less rejected Barrios with his metal strings and "backward-looking 19th century-type" repertoire. As fate would have it, Segovia was also in Buenos Aires at this time and having no trouble filling the theatres in which he appeared. Segovia had not been in Argentina since 1921 (when he and Barrios first met). On July 3 in the Teatro Odeon he performed the first of a total of nine concerts he would give over the next month and a half to packed houses, one of which Barrios reputedly attended:

**Andrés Segovia, July 3, 1928**

- First Part:** 1. Minueto (Sor)  
2. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
3. Fandanguillo (Turina)  
4. Estudio (Tárrega)

- Second Part:** 1. Prelude, Allemande, Fugue, Courante  
and Gavotte (Bach)  
2. Minuet (Haydn)  
3. Sonatina (Torroba)  
4. Leyenda (Albéniz)

In the seven years that had transpired since their meeting, Segovia had begun to accrue an international reputation, having appeared in Europe, South America and the United States. Barrios had stayed in South America and, though he had worked diligently, he had not established himself to any degree on an international scale. In those seven years Barrios had created a great amount of music. At the same time Segovia had been busy creating his repertoire which now included music by Ponce, Turina, Torroba, Tansman, Roussel and Scott—all written for him and because of him in 20th century harmonic language.

The irony of all this must have been quite bittersweet to Barrios. No wonder he angrily swore never to return. This was a very critical point for Barrios' psyche. He had done his best and it had been rejected. For such a "self-confident" being, this must have been very hard to endure. He evidently did not abandon Buenos Aires immediately for the record shows that he resumed recording for Odeon on March 27, 1929 and did four more selections, as well as rerecording three selections from the sessions done the previous year. His last session was April 19. He also edited several original pieces at this time with José B. Romero of Casa Romero Fernandez.<sup>11</sup>



He departed Buenos Aires and proceeded directly to Brazil where a month later he surfaced in Rio de Janeiro playing an abridged program at the *Cine Teatro Progresso* on May 22, 1929:

Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
Valsa (Barrios)  
Nocturne (Chopin)  
Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)  
Pot-Pourri Lyrico (Barrios)

He then worked his way south, arriving in Pelotas, in Rio Grande do Sul, performing on July 13 in the Conservatory of Music this program:

1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)
2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne
3. Madrigal Gavota (Barrios)
4. Capricho Español (Barrios)
5. Asturias (Albéniz)
6. Armonías de América (Barrios)
7. Luar do Sertao (Cearense - arr. Barrios)
8. Valsa No. 3

The following evening he presented this concert in Pelotas at the *Teatro 7 de Abril*:

- First Part:**
1. Andante (Barrios)
  2. Allegretto (Moreno Torroba)
  3. Cueca Chilena (Barrios)
  4. Allegro Vivace (Barrios)

- Second Part:**
1. Romanza (Napoleao)
  2. Danza Española No.5 (Granados)
  3. Mazurka Apassionata (Barrios)
  4. Pot-Pourri Lyrico (Barrios)

- Third Part:**
1. Sevilla (Albéniz)
  2. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)
  3. Contemplación (Barrios)
  4. Alvorada Histórica Paraguaya (Barrios)



This performance is the first time Barrios programmed a distinctly "Segovian" piece: the *Allegretto* from the *Sonatina* by Torroba. He probably heard Segovia play it in Buenos Aires and acquired the sheet music together with *Fandanguillo* of Turina, for later in the year he would perform the entire *Sonatina* as well as *Fandanguillo*. As to what exactly the original pieces *Andante* and *Allegro Vivace* were is hard to say—it is the only example of said pieces on any of his programs.

In the same theatre, on July 19, he performed these works:

- First Part:** 1. Scherzo (Coste)  
2. Valsa Brilhante (Barrios)  
3. Confesión (Barrios)  
4. Tarantella (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Allegretto-Sonata XIV (Beethoven)  
2. Novellete (Schumann)  
3. Choro Brasileiro (Barrios)  
4. Nocturne (Chopin)  
5. Minuet (Paderewsky)

- Third Part:** 1. Granada (Albéniz)  
2. Tremolo (Tárrega)  
3. Estudio (Tárrega)  
4. Aconquija (Barrios)  
5. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)

Guitarist Pedro Duval, a resident of Pelotas during this time, recalls his encounters with Barrios:

I was 17 years old. I had been studying guitar since April 1927. I heard the magic guitar of Barrios in three of the four concerts he gave in Pelotas. After listening to him in his inaugural concert I was dazzled: the dominion that he demonstrated over his instrument, placed in every moment at the service of Art, his profound musical expression captivated me 'in extremis' to such a point that even today I consider having heard the magnificent art of this genuine artist a gift from God. I also had the pleasure and honor of meeting him personally in his apartment at the Grande Hotel, where he paternally received me on three occasions. During my visits, always in the morning, Barrios was studying. One time he was composing a study (I believe in c minor) in homage to Sor. Between pieces some times I would ask him questions. On one occasion, Barrios suddenly stopped playing a piece, and, as if he were talking to himself, declaimed: "Music is the word of God and the guitar the most beautiful of instruments; neither the



extension of the piano nor the nobleness of the cello can equal it", and he continued playing. One day I asked him "Maestro, do you ever get nervous before giving a concert?" Barrios humbly answered: "The day before a concert is always for me a day of anguish."

Before leaving Pelotas he would give yet one more concert on July 21. He continued touring through southern Brazil, making his way back to Sao Paulo where on October 13th he performed in the Municipal Theatre this program:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne  
3. Madrigal (Barrios)  
4. Capricho Español (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Prelude (Bach)  
2. Loure (Bach)  
3. Minuet (Beethoven)  
4. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
5. Nocture (Chopin)

- Third Part:** 1. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
2. Souvenir d'un Rêve (Barrios)  
3. Harmonias de America (Barrios)  
4. Alvorada Histórica Paraguaya (Barrios)

This was followed five days later by another performance in the Municipal Theatre:

- First Part:** 1. Confesión (Barrios)  
2. Mazurka Appassionata (Barrios)  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. Allegro Brillhante (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Courante (Bach)  
2. Gavotte (Bach)  
3. Mazurka (Chopin)  
4. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)  
5. Concierto en La Menor (Arcas)

- Third Part:** 1. Romanza (Napoleao)  
2. Cueca Chilena (Barrios)  
3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
4. Gran Jota Aragoneza (Barrios)



# THEATRO MUNICIPAL

SÃO PAULO

Domingo 13 de Outubro de 1929

O REI DO VIOLÃO



AGUSTIN BARRIOS





Dated Rio de Janeiro 1929. This photo shows Barrios visiting the well known Brazilian guitarist, Joao Pernambuco (1883 – 1947), standing on Barrios' right. The other gentleman is Quincas La Ranjera, a Brazilian music promoter.



On October 25 in the Municipal Theatre a "Grande Festival Litero-Musical" ("Grand Literary-Musical Festival") was given to celebrate Barrios' farewell to Sao Paulo. The baritone De Marco, the gaucho orator Carlos Cavaco and the poets Laurindo de Brito, Rocha Ferreira and Francisco Martín Barrios all participated in this evening of music and poetry. Barrios performed five selections: *Sherzo* (Coste), *Andante* (Mozart), *Tarantella* (Levino-Barrios), *Sonatina: Allegretto-Andante-Allegro* (Torroba), and *Asturias* (Albéniz).

From Sao Paulo he journeyed to Rio de Janeiro where he gave this concert on November 28 in the Municipal Theatre:

- First Part:** 1. La Samaritana (Barrios)  
2. Minuet in B (Barrios)  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. Allegro Brilhante (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
2. Mazurka (Chopin)  
3. Canzonetta (Mendelssohn)  
4. Fandanguillo (Turina)  
5. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
6. Gran Fantasía en La (Arcas)

- Third Part:** 1. O Choro da Saudade (Barrios)  
2. Página de Album (Barrios)  
3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
4. Jota Aragoneza (Barrios)

Here for the first time is his outstanding piece *Choro da Saudade*. I am of the opinion that this piece was written before 1929 – perhaps the *Aire Brasileiro* that he first played in Montevideo in 1925 is the same piece, or the *Choro Brasileiro* he performed a few months earlier in Pelotas.

It was during this year that Barrios met Gloria Seban (possibly in Pelotas or in Rio de Janeiro)<sup>12</sup> who would be his constant companion until the end of his days. She was always referred to as "Gloria de Mangoré", and Barrios presented her publicly as his wife (no corroboration has been found certifying that they were married legally). Gloria was described as "an Amazon", "a mulatto of indian-negroid extraction". She was a practical, uneducated woman who was quite talented at cooking. She took care of Agustín's everyday "material needs". Summing up their relationship, Barrios declared in an interview that appeared in the *Diario Latino* on July 1, 1933 in San Salvador, El Salvador, that "Gloria is not a musician and that is why we get along so well. She enjoys my music and I have a great appreciation of her as the woman of the house." She was not an artist and was described by



some as being quite unaware of Barrios' true level of genius. But she obviously loved him for during the ensuing 14 years she stayed with him through periods of constant travel, extreme financial difficulty, and failing health. Barrios' "celibacy" had come to an end – what else was there on the horizon?



Gloria Seban as she looked when she and Agustín first met in 1929.



## CHAPTER FOUR:

# CACIQUE NITSUGA MANGORE

The year 1930 marks the beginning of a new period: the birth of Chief Nitsuga Mangoré, the "messenger of the Guaraní race...the Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay." Barrios had made up his mind to leave southern South America and began working his way northward from Rio de Janeiro. He started pursuing this approach to attract a greater public and perhaps satisfy his own psychological whim (something the reader will recall he had considered many years earlier when he was still in Paraguay and toyed with the idea of billing himself as "Chief Nitzuga"). Perhaps he was somewhat disillusioned about his lack of success as Agustín Pío Barrios. The earliest documented public appearance of Barrios as Chief Nitsuga Mangoré, was in Bahia, Brazil in August of 1930. He was billed as "Agustín Barrios portraying the caricature of Nitsuga", indicating the beginning of a gradual transition which three years later would see him presenting himself exclusively as Nitsuga Mangoré with little mention whatsoever of Agustín Barrios. This is also the first appearance of his poem *Profesión de Fe* ("Profession of Faith") in which he explains in mythical fashion how Chief Nitsuga came to play the guitar:

### Profession of Faith

Tupá, the supreme spirit and protector of my people,  
Found me one day in the middle of the greening forest,  
Enraptured in the contemplation of Nature.  
And he told me: "Take this mysterious box and reveal its secrets."  
And enclosing within it all the songs of the birds of the jungle  
And the mournful sighs of the plants,  
He abandoned it in my hands.  
I took it and obeying Tupá's command I held it close to my heart.  
Embracing it I passed many moons on the edge of a spring fountain  
And one night, Yacy (the moon, our mother),  
Reflected in the crystal liquid,  
Feeling the sadness of my indian soul,  
Gave me six silver moonbeams  
With which to discover its secrets.  
And the miracle took place:  
From the bottom of the mysterious box,  
There came forth a marvelous symphony  
Of all the virgin voices of America.





Barrios as Cacique Nitsuga Mangoré circa 1931



Starting in mid 1930 in northwestern Brazil, this full blown concept suddenly emerges: Nitsuga Mangoré — complete with costumes (he wore feathers and even posed with bow and arrow) and poetry — emphasizing the fact that here was a true representative of the Guaraní culture mystically empowered to share with them the “songs of our birds and the fragrance of our forests through the music of my guitar.” This is a fully developed, theatrical concept. As his brother Martín was with him at this time, he may have had a hand in its development. Perhaps Gloria had some influence in the matter. But what is certain is that he began billing himself as “the best guitarist in the world” who was touring Brazil, after which he would be “leaving for Europe contracted by a powerful American firm for concerts in Madrid, Paris, London and New York.” This of course was not the case but it made good press. Forgetting his lack of success in Argentina, he was heading toward virgin territory where no one as yet knew him and where few classical guitarists had ever been. Proclaiming himself “the best in the world” on an international tour was definitely “positive thinking” on his part — by believing in his “new self” he would no doubt make his dreams a reality.

The piece *Diana Guaraní* had been developing for several years. It is indicative of the “Guaraní theme” that seemed to be suggesting itself to Barrios more and more as time passed. Nitsuga is of course Agustín spelled backwards. But where did he get the name “Mangoré”? Mangoré was a chief of the *timbúes*, one of the tribes that made up the Guaraní nation that stretched in preconquest times from the eastern foot of Andes to the coast of present day southern Brazil. In 1526 the Genovese explorer Sebastian Cabot was the first European to sail and explore the Rio de la Plata. He founded a settlement in 1527 called Sancti Spiritus on the banks of the Paraná River in present day Argentina. Mangoré and his people were friendly with the Spanish visitors, and frequently visited Sancti Spiritus to engage in barter and trade. A certain Spanish couple, Sebastián Hurtado and wife Lucía Miranda, were among the small retinue of Europeans who manned this initial settlement. Mangoré was taken with Lucía Miranda’s beauty, and soon made overtures in the form of gifts to her. Being a good Christian woman, she of course rejected his offerings. Mangoré thus made up his mind to possess her at all costs.

Some time later, while Sebastián Hurtado was away from the settlement on a procurement mission, Mangoré launched a surprise attack on Sancti Spiritus wherein the fighting was fierce and Mangoré was killed. The *timbúes* were victorious and to Mangoré’s brother, Siripo, fell the spoils — primarily, Lucía Miranda. He carried her off and tried to force her to marry him, but she would have none of it. At some point, Sebastián, who had returned to Sancti Spiritus to a scene of death and destruction, lost his head when he realized that his wife had been taken captive and went after her,



eventually being taken prisoner himself. Brought before Siripo, Lucía pleaded to spare Sebastián's life. Siripo consented but only if Sebastián chose an indian wife with the further condition that she and Sebastián would no longer be involved as man and wife in any way. Unfortunately, as the story goes, they were a short time later caught in "the conjugal act" by Siripo and as punishment she was burned at the stake and he was shot full of arrows.

Mangoré was a kind of Guaraní folk hero who died "in pursuit of love". Perhaps this is why Barrios chose this particular name. Maybe after his rejection in Buenos Aires, in the shadow of Segovia, he began to look for his inspiration and identity from his own roots. Undertaking a tour of northern Brazil, moving farther and farther away from the Rio de la Plata, he was developing his own fantasy character, being drawn deeper and deeper into the fantasy (namely, that he was "a little indian of his tribe taught by the mission fathers, etc."). I suspect that he felt a subconscious desire to abandon "Agustín Barrios", who did his best and was rejected, perhaps even humiliated, by the public of Buenos Aires. That and a bit of old fashioned pragmatism – namely, that for the average South American, to see a real indian chief from the jungles of Paraguay play the guitar was a lot more exotic and intriguing than simply going to see Mr. Agustín Barrios. It no doubt worked, for Barrios continued as Chief Nitsuga for the next four years.

On August 12 in the Theatro Guarany in Bahia Barrios gave this program:

**First Part:** 1. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)

2. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)
3. Madrigal Gavotte (Barrios)
4. Rapsodia Andaluza (Barrios)

**Second Part:** 1. Loure (Bach)

2. Mozart Variations (Sor)
3. Minuet (Beethoven)
4. Nocturne (Chopin)

**Third Part:** 1. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)

2. Leyenda (Albéniz)
3. Poema de America (Barrios)
4. Alvorada Guarany (Barrios)

*Poema de América* is quite probably another title for *Armonías de America*. This is the first time he uses the title *Un Sueño en la Floresta* (literally, "A Dream in the Forest" – imagery more befitting the concept of "Nitsuga from the jungle") for the tremolo piece he had been calling since 1918 *Souvenir d'un Reve* ("Remembrance of a Dream").



The second concert in Bahia occurred on August 20 in the Salon of Associated Commerce:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
2. Confissao d'Amor (Barrios)  
3. Danza Chilena (Barrios)  
4. Tarantella (Barrios)
- Second Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
2. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)  
3. Romanza (Napoleao)  
4. Allegro Brilhante (Barrios)
- Third Part:** 1. Estudio No. 22 (Coste)  
2. Contemplación (Barrios)  
3. "Divertissement" Bicho Feo (Barrios)  
4. Gran Jota Aragoneza (Barrios)

The remainder of 1930 Barrios spent moving northward, spending time in Aracaju and Maceió. On January 1, 1931, he arrived in Recife, the capital of the State of Pernambuco. He would remain in Recife for about 6 weeks, giving a total of 18 concerts at the Teatro Santa Izabel, Cine-Teatro Moderno, Cine Teatro da Paz, the Casino Boa Viagem, Ideal Cinema and the Cinema Encruzilhada. The first concert took place on January 7 at the Theatro Santa Izabel:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Parga)  
2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne  
3. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
4. Rapsodia Española (Barrios)
- Second Part:** 1. Loure (Bach)  
2. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
3. Minuet (Beethoven)  
4. Nocturne (Chopin)
- Third Part:** 1. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
2. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Alvorada Guaraní (Barrios)



Five days later on January 12 he gave this concert in the same theatre:

- First Part:** 1. Scherzo (Coste)  
2. Confissao (Barrios)  
3. Romanza (Napoleao)  
4. Allegro Brilhante (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Gavotte (Bach)  
2. Traumerei (Schumann)  
3. Canzoneta (Mendelssohn)  
4. Minuet (Paderewski)  
5. Alvorada Guarany (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
2. Poema de América (Barrios)  
3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
4. Gran Jota Aragoneza (Barrios)

On January 22 Barrios gave a *Noite de Violao* ("An Evening of Guitar") which included the participation of two local guitarists: Alfredo Madeiros and Adhemar Campos as well as a tenor, Vicente Cunha:

- First Part:** Solos by Barrios  
1. Granada (Albéniz)  
2. Rapsodia Española (Barrios)  
3. Allegro Brilhante (Barrios)

- Second Part:** Duo Barrios/Madeiros  
1. Two choros típicos:  
a) Na Chuva  
b) Muzurka  
2. Maiby

- Third Part:** Vicente Cunha, vocalist accompanied on guitars by A. Madeiros and A. Campos  
1. Iracema  
2. Unico Amor

All this was then followed by the presentation of a film called *Loucuras de um Beijo* featuring several singers all speaking and singing "the purest Spanish". This program illustrates how well Barrios integrated himself with local musicians in the many towns he visited. This performance was evidently quite successful as six days later Barrios presented himself again in concert with guitarist Alfredo Madeiros as well as brother Francisco Martín at the casino room of the Tennis Club of Boa Viagem.



- First Part:** 1. Andante (Mozart)  
 2. Allegretto (Moreno Torroba)  
 3. Minuet (Paderewski)  
 4. a) Waltz No.7 (Chopin)  
 b) Nocturne (Chopin)

**Second Part:** Poetry by Francisco M. Barrios with musical interpretations by Agustín Barrios

1. Oyendo a Beethoven
2. Labios de Piedra
3. Un Poema de Amor
4. Salomé (poema bíblico)

- Third Part:** 1. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
 2. Alvorada Guarany (Barrios)  
 3. Dois Choros Típicos with Alfredo Medeiros  
 4. Valsa Nortista (Medeiros) with Medeiros

Barrios continued to project Europe and the United States as his future destinations (and sometimes as places he had been!). He, Gloria and Martín departed Recife February 13 on the steamship *Campos Sales* with "destination to Europe."<sup>1</sup> Eight days later in the newspaper *A Razao* in the city of Fortaleza there appeared an article announcing Barrios' imminent arrival as well as a concert at the Theatro José de Alencar: "In our offices today was Sr. Francisco M. Barrios, who came to announce the arrival in Fortaleza of the celebrated Guaraní Indian, Agustín Barrios, the major guitarist today, who has toured the Americas and almost the whole of Brazil, obtaining loud acclaim wherever he plays." Brother Martín was performing his duties as "manager" preparing the way. On February 20 Barrios gave a private concert for the press of Fortaleza, following this on February 26 with a public concert at the Club dos Diarios:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
 2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne  
 3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
 4. Rapsodia Española (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
 2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
 3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
 4. Nocturne (Chopin)

- Third Part:** 1. Asturias (Albéniz)  
 2. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
 3. Poema de América (Barrios)  
 4. Alvorada Guarany (Barrios)



Here for the first time is Bach's *Prelude and Fugue* (which I believe was the fugue from the *First Violin Sonata*). According to one critic it was less well received by the public of Fortaleza due to the "excessive classicism of the composer which requires a strict musical education to be duly appreciated". Without compromise, Barrios was still continuing to add major pieces to his repertoire, be they transcriptions or original works. On February 28 and March 1 he gave concerts in the Cine Moderno. Two weeks later on March 16 he gave this concert again at the Club dos Diarios:

- First Part:** 1. Brazilian National Anthem  
 2. Confissao (Barrios)  
 3. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)  
 4. Romanza (Napoleao)  
 5. Allegro Brilhante (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
 2. Canzoneta (Mendelssohn)  
 3. Momento Musical (Schumann)  
 4. Minuet (Paderewski)  
 5. Concerto en La Menor (Arcas)

- Third Part:** 1. Paraguayan National Anthem  
 2. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
 3. Sad Song (Tchaikowsky)  
 4. Pantheismo (Barrios)  
 5. Jota Aragoneza (Barrios)

A new work, *Pantheismo*, was tried out in this concert. He evidently never played it again, at least not with that title (he may have renamed it—perhaps it was the piece known as *Invocación a la Luna*—"Invocation to the Moon"). By now the reader has noticed that Barrios kept a "core group" of pieces in his repertoire that he repeatedly played more than any others: *Jota Aragonesa*, *Diana Guaraní*, *Vals No. 3*, *Mazurka Apasionada*, *La Catedral*, *Contemplación*, *Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello*, *Un Sueño en la Floresta*, *Allegro Brillante*, *Pot-Pourri Lírico*, *Tarantella*, *Gavota*, *Madrigal*, Bach's *Loure*, Beethoven's *Minuet*, Sor's *Mozart Variations*, Chopin's *Nocturne*, Schumann's *Traumerei*, etc. These pieces proved to be consistently popular with the public, providing him the vehicles to display his virtuosity as player, composer and arranger.

After departing Fortaleza, Barrios went slightly south to the town of Natal in the State of Rio Grande do Norte where the "famous guaraní indian Agustín Barrios" played on March 28 in the Theatro Carlos Gomes this program:



- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
 2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne  
 3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
 4. Pot-Pourri Lyrico (Barrios)
- Second Part:** 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
 2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
 3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
 4. Nocturne (Chopin)
- Third Part:** 1. Asturias (Albéniz)  
 2. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
 3. Poema de América (Barrios)  
 4. Alvorada Guarany (Barrios)

From this point on no more mention is made of Francisco Martín Barrios and it is assumed that he returned to Paraguay (where he lived out his days, taking his own life some eight years later in a suicide on September 21, 1939 in Asunción). Gloria and Agustín journeyed northward to the town of Sao Luis in the State of Maranhao. Arriving in late April, Barrios gave an abridged concert for the press on May 1, 1931 at the Maranhao Club:

- First Part:** 1. Contemplación (Barrios)  
 2. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
 3. Romanza (Napoleao)  
 4. Allegro Brilhante (Barrios)
- Intermission**
- Second Part:** 1. Nocturne (Chopin)  
 2. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
 3. Gloria e Amor (Barrios)  
 4. Pot-Pourri Lyrico (Barrios)  
 5. Alvorada Histórica Guarany (Barrios)

This particular performance allowed all those in attendance to personally meet the artist during intermission. The new composition *Gloria e Amor* was a waltz and is quite obviously dedicated to his wife. Barrios stayed in Sao Luiz the balance of May, giving two concerts on the 13th and the 18th.

On May 29 he and Gloria arrived in Belem on the passenger boat Itapé. A concert for the press of Belem was given on June 4 followed on June 11 with this program at the Theatro da Paz :



- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. Potpourri Lyrico (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
4. Nocturne No. 2 (Chopin)

- Third Part:** 1. Leyenda de Asturias (Albéniz)  
2. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
3. Poema de America (Barrios)  
4. Alvorada Guarany (Barrios)

This program is exactly the same as the one he would give in Manaus about two months later (he also played this program two months earlier in Natal.) It is perhaps, if one has to choose, the most typical program of this period. He was playing Bach's *Prelude and Fugue* with regularity now since incorporating it into his concert performances some seven months earlier. *Alvorada Guaraní* is the piece he was now consistently using to close his performances.

The months of June, July and August were spent "going up the Amazon" from Belem to Manaus, arriving in August where on the 26th Barrios gave a "press concert" at the *Fabrica de Cerveja Amazonense* ("Amazonian Beer Factory") followed on September 1 by the aforementioned concert. By September 12 they were back in Belem "returning from Manaus with destination to Europe via Venezuela." Here Barrios gave another concert. From Belem they journeyed to French Guiana where in the capital city of Cayenne he gave a concert. Barrios stated that he was en route to "Venezuela, Central America and Europe." He had made up his mind to continue touring in the Americas but kept the long-range plan of Europe as his final goal.

Some two months later Barrios surfaced in Martinique where on December 2 in the capital city of Fort-de-France he gave in the Municipal Theatre this concert, similar to those mentioned thus far but including a new work by the French composer Jules Massenet (1842-1912), obviously to please the public of Martinique:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne



«Si houvesse um superlativo para o superlativo "optimo", esse eu applicaria ao magistral Barrios», — Olavo Bilac.

## SALÃO NOBRE DO IDEAL CLUB

Em homenagem á Imprensa Amazonense

### UNICO GRANDE CONCERTO

pelo celebre indio guarany

\* \* \* **BARRIOS** \* \* \*

(O REI DO VIOLÃO)

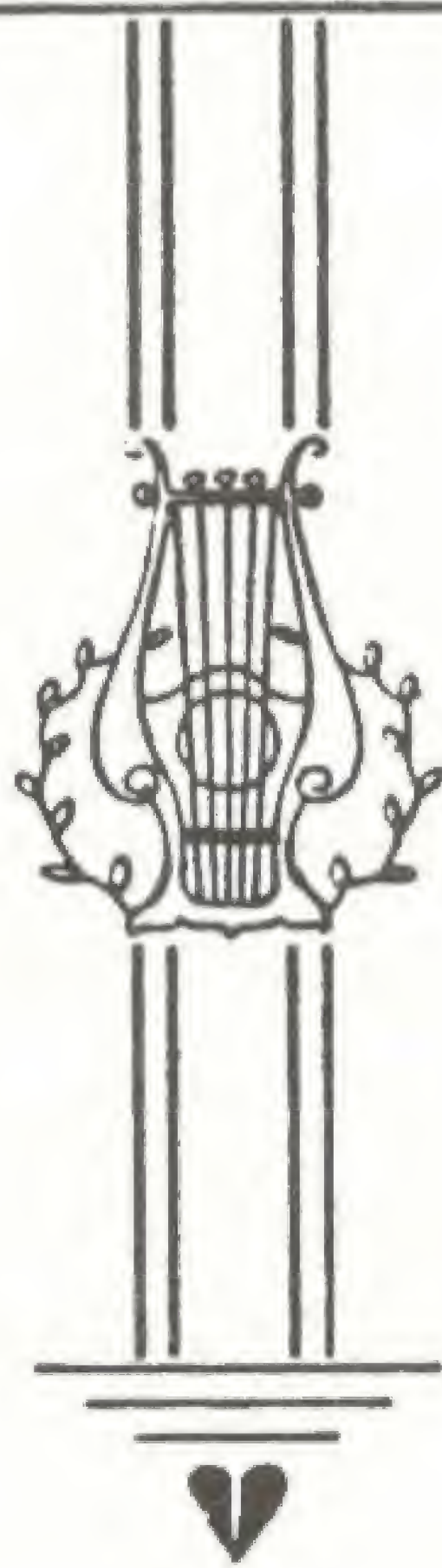
TERÇA-FEIRA, 1.º DE SETEMBRO DE 1931

ÁS 20 1/2 HORAS

«O Grande Barrios fez com o violão o que Victor Hugo fez com o argot das ruas, redimiu-o! Coelho Netto.

Liv. Classica, Manãos-8-931.

### PROGRAMMA



#### I

- BARRIOS . . . { I — SERENATA MOURISCA.  
II — A CATHEDRAL { a) andante religioso.  
III — VALSA N.º 3. b) allegro.  
IV — POT-POURRI LYRICO.

#### II

- BACH. . . . . V — PRELUDIO E FUGA.  
BEETHOVEN . VI — MÉNUET  
MOZART-SORS VII — THEMA VARIADO.  
CHOPIN. . . . VIII — NOCTURNO

#### III

- ALBENIZ . . . IX — LEGENDA DE ASTURIAS.  
X — SONHO NA FLORESTA.  
BARRIOS . . . { XI — POEMA DA AMERICA.  
XII — ALVORADA GUARANY.

Program from Manaus, September 1, 1931



3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)
4. Rapsodia Española (Barrios)

- Second Part:**
1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)
  2. Minuet (Beethoven)
  3. Mozart Variations (Sor)
  4. Nocturne (Chopin)

- Third Part:**
1. Elégie (Massenet)
  2. Leyenda (Albéniz)
  3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)
  4. Potpourri Lírico (Barrios)

This was followed by another concert on December 5:

- First Part:**
1. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)
  2. Danza Chilena (Barrios)
  3. Mazurka Apasionata (Barrios)
  4. Tarantella (Barrios)

- Second Part:**
1. Reverie (Schumann)
  2. Canzoneta (Mendelssohn)
  3. Minuet (Paderewski)
  4. Allegro Brillante (Sor)

- Third Part:**
1. Momento Musical (Schubert)
  2. Sevilla (Albéniz)
  3. Contemplación (Barrios)
  4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

The *Allegro Brillante* by Sor appears to be a new addition (what opus by Sor this may have been is open to conjecture). Here for the first time is the name *Diana Guaraní* given for the piece that proved to be his most popular work.

From Martinique he traveled to Trinidad where on January 11 he gave a concert that included three local musicians: Giuseppe F. Colloca on clarinet (playing a *Fantastic Caprice* arranged from operatic airs), and Mr. McD. Carpenter playing violin, both artists accompanied by Mr. J. Donald Greaves on piano. The program Barrios played was a typical offering of the works he was repeating with regularity at this time:

- First Part:**
1. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne
  2. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)
  3. Potpourri Lírico (Barrios)
  4. Fantastic Caprice — clarinet solo by G.F. Colloca



- Second Part:** 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
4. Nocturne in Eb (Chopin)  
5. Violin Solo by Mr. McD. Carpenter

- Third Part:** 1. Minuet (Paderewski)  
2. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
3. A Dream in the Forest (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guarany (Barrios)

Barrios was well received by the public of Port-of-Spain. The music critic (unidentified) for the newspaper *Port-of-Spain Gazette* wrote an extensive review of the concert in the edition of January 14 from which is excerpted the following:

### EMINENT GUITARIST IN TRINIDAD

#### Excellent Recital at St. Patrick's Hall

#### Repeat Performance Promised

I was greatly impressed on Monday evening by the playing of the guitar by Señor Augustin Barrios, an Indian of Paraguay. And who was not? An elaborate program excellently rendered afforded an evening of great delight.

With the exception of Mr. Bogumil Sykora, the noted cellist who visited Trinidad in 1925, Snr. Barrios stands alone during the past two decades as an exponent of music on any instrument to dominate the sentiments of an entire audience in Port-of-Spain, satisfying all hearers with the entire programme, drawing them closer with eager love, admiration and general happiness in what they were listening to.

Snr. Barrios possesses a charming personality. He is unaffected and has a thorough knowledge of music and is a great lover of the guitar, his favorite instrument.

Another critic for the *Trinidad Guardian* of January 14 stated:

This was the first time that a guitar soloist appeared in Trinidad.

Mr. J. Donald Greaves, in introducing Snr. Augustin Barrios, said that he felt it an honour to be privileged to introduce such an eminent musician.



It was difficult to anticipate how the audience would take classical work on the guitar but he could without dread or fear recommend him highly as when he heard him he was carried away.

He begged the audience to remember that the recitalist could not understand English, and was not accustomed to English customs. He might mistake a slight movement for lack of interest in his work.

To avoid any misunderstanding he asked them to keep as quiet as possible.

The comment that Barrios was the first classical guitarist to concertize in Trinidad points up the fact that in many places, including fairly large populations, Barrios was the first concert guitarist ever to appear. This was particularly true as he moved northward through Brazil—I suspect that Barrios played many, many concerts in small towns where no newspapers existed and of which consequently there is no record. He was not only the first true *Pan-American* concert artist of his era but he also must be recognized as *the* pioneer of the classic guitar in Iberoamerica.

At this time the noted British conductor Sir Henry Joseph Wood (1869-1944) was in Trinidad and, after hearing Barrios, publicly declared:

I have had the great pleasure of hearing Señor Augustin Barrios give a private recital this afternoon upon that rarely heard instrument to us English—the Guitar. Señor Barrios is quite a unique artist, his tonal variety obtained by plucking the strings at three or four different points, his colorful playing, rhythm, perfect intonation and splendid interpretive ability, make his playing a real pleasure and delight to all music lovers.

Sir Henry Wood

January 18, 1932

Dundonald Street

Port-of-Spain

Trinidad



His popularity was such that on January 19 at the Royal Victoria Institute, Barrios offered another concert including the aforementioned local musicians:

- First Part:** 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
2. Minuet in G (Beethoven)  
3. Nocturne in Eb (Chopin)  
4. Allegro Brillante (Sor)  
5. Violin Solo — Mr. McD. Carpenter  
6. Song: The Lass with a Delicate Air (Arne)  
Mrs. A.J. Turner, vocalist
- Second Part:** 1. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
2. Gavotte-Madrigal (Barrios)  
3. Tarantella (Barrios)  
4. Clarinet solo: Capricho Fantástico (Colloca)
- Third Part:** 1. Il Trovatore — Miserer (Verdi)  
2. Canzonetta (Mendelssohn)  
3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

In the *Trinidad Guardian* of January 21 appeared a review of this concert under the heading "Señor Barrios Scores Again":

His excellency the Governor and Lady Hollis, attended by Mr. A.J. de Boissiere, and hundreds of Trinidad society women and men attended the Guitar Recital at the Victoria Institute on Tuesday evening.

Señor Barrios held the audience spellbound, as, he played his marvelous solos on the guitar.

Mr. J. Donald Greaves, in introducing Señor Barrios, said it was a pleasure to introduce so great an artist.

He asked the audience not only to be as quiet as possible, but to assist by listening attentively to the various items.

They should prepare their minds by glancing at the programme and getting the atmosphere of the piece to be played.

As a painter gauges the size of the canvas before him and takes in, at a glance, the outline of the figure to be drawn, so does the guitarist, as he sits down, immediately concentrate on the picture he wishes us to interpret.

When he runs his hand up and down the instrument it is analogous to the great painter at work.



On January 25 Barrios visited the Institute for the Blind as well as the House of Refuge in Port-of-Spain where he played concerts for the blind and the poor. The inmates of these institutions "were delighted and very appreciative. The outstanding numbers which they enjoyed most were *Zapateado* and *Diana Guaraní*. " This is the first performance of one of Barrios' most popular pieces, the *Zapateado* or *Zapateado Caribe*. ("Caribbean Zapateado"). He probably began composing this piece some weeks earlier upon his arrival in Martinique. This donation of his time and talent is an example of the unselfish generosity that Barrios felt towards those in less fortunate circumstances. On numerous occasions in different countries he performed benefit concerts for victims of natural disaster (such as a flood) or made special appearances at institutions (as when he played for the inmates of the Central Penitentiary in Tegucigalpa, Honduras on August 16, 1933).

On Sunday evening, January 27, Barrios gave what was probably his last concert in Trinidad at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Hackett where "the large drawing and dining rooms were opened up and accommodated a great many persons. The place was packed, persons being satisfied to sit behind the temporary platform."

Evidently Barrios had formed a relationship with the above cited clarinetist Giuseppi Colloca, for some weeks later in Venezuela Colloca is mentioned as "Mangoré's representative". Barrios had thus filled the vacancy left by his brother Martín's departure a year earlier in Brazil. At some point in February they all departed for Venezuela where on the twenty-first Barrios gave a typical "press concert" in Caracas at the National Academy of Fine Arts. Over the next two months he would give a total of twenty five concerts! Barrios proved to be a sensation with the public of Caracas. The months that he passed there were probably the most successful of his career. The Venezuelan public just couldn't get enough of him. He was constantly praised in the press and invited to numerous prominent social functions. On February 25, Barrios gave his first public concert at the Municipal Theatre in Caracas:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
 2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne  
 3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
 4. Capricho Español (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
 2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
 3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
 4. Nocturne in Eb (Chopin)



- Third Part:** 1. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
2. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

He was so enthusiastically received that after completing the second part, he was called back by the insistent applause of the audience and spontaneously performed *Tu y Yo* by Czibulka. A second performance took place on February 28:

- First Part:** 1. Romanza (Napoleao)  
2. Danza Chilena (Barrios)  
3. Confesión (Barrios)  
4. Tarantella (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
2. Canzonetta (Mendelssohn)  
3. Minuet (Paderewsky)  
4. a) Prelude (Chopin)  
b) Waltz (Chopin)

- Third Part:** 1. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
2. Contemplación (Barrios)  
3. Zapateado (Barrios)  
4. Pot-Pourri Lírico (Barrios)

Again, the public was so responsive that Barrios played as “extras” *Diana Guaraní* after the Chopin waltz as well as the Chopin *Nocturne* after *Sevilla*. The concert was a total artistic success and he was given a standing ovation, but, as one critic proclaimed:

To the concerts of this artist, this soulful, emotive indian, our public has not responded: as in the first, only about 300 persons attended this second concert. Why? We believe that the public of Caracas should realize that in the Municipal Theatre is an Artist whom we will not be able to see after this occasion.

It evidently didn't take long for the word to get around, for, as mentioned above, over the next eight weeks Barrios would take Caracas by storm, performing more concerts than any musician who had ever visited the city. This must have been a wonderful time: enthusiastic acclaim by critics and public alike as well as financial rewards—at no other time would he ever achieve such a level of total success. Barrios was at the zenith of his artistic and technical abilities. Since the appearance of Nitsuga Mangoré in 1930 he had been developing his repertoire along specific conceptual lines, and



from this time forward all his programs reflect this maturity. Through incessant performing he had, by process of elimination, honed his concert programs to a sharp edge. The basic architecture of his performances was resolved and perfected. While he would continue to compose and arrange new works, the confidence he had, for example, in *Diana Guaraní*, *Un Sueño en la Floresta*, Beethoven's *Minuet* or Chopin's *Nocturne* was rock solid, forming a permanent foundation which he utilized till the end of his days.

On March 1 Barrios gave his third concert in Caracas at the Municipal Theatre to a standing room only audience:

- First Part:** 1. Minuet in A (Sor)  
2. Romanza-imitación violoncello (Barrios)  
3. Mazurka Apasionada (Barrios)  
4. Allegro Brillante (Barrios)

- Second Part:** 1. Bouree (Bach)  
2. Andante (Mozart)  
3. Canto de Primavera (Mendelssohn)  
4. Momento Musical (Schubert)

- Third Part:** 1. Danza No. 5 (Granados)  
2. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
3. Meditación (Tolsa)  
4. Gran Jota (Barrios)

It was announced at this time that two days hence, on March 3, Barrios would take part in a special concert organized in his honor by Raúl Borges (guitarist), Manuel Porras (guitarist), Estatio Crespo (maracas) and Leoncio Narvarte (on the *cuatro*, a small 4-string Venezuelan guitar). Barrios performed *Bicho Feo* as well as Borges' *Fuente Morisca*. An arrangement of his *Zapateado* for 3 guitars was played by Barrios, Borges and Porras. The concert was concluded with everyone improvising on the *joropo*, Venezuela's national dance. The concert was sold out and a resounding success. The critic *Criticón* of the *El Nuevo Diario* newspaper observed "in the final *joropo* there was a moment when we thought Mangoré to be one of us. The indian with the magic fingers demonstrated his amazing facility to interpret music of all genres. From one day to the next he learned the *joropo* by memory."

Barrios' impact on the guitar community of Venezuela was profound. He had made friends with "the father of Venezuelan guitar" Raúl Borges (who subsequently became the teacher of Antonio Lauro, Alirio Diaz and Rodrigo Riera—a second generation of guitarists who decades later brought the Venezuelan school of guitar to perfection). Antonio Lauro (1917-1986), viewed as perhaps the most important guitarist/composer from Venezuela, met Barrios at this time in the home of Raúl Borges:



When I first heard Mangoré I had been studying piano for several years. I was astounded listening to him, realizing what the guitar is capable of. From that moment on I fell in love with the guitar and abandoned everything else. Mangoré was a very open person and on certain occasions shared his knowledge with us. Whatever anyone asked of him, he would give them. With each question, he would give a long reply, almost a complete class you might say. He gave long explanations regarding pulsation and set us to practicing ligados, arpeggios, general sonority and aesthetics of performance. I eventually began serious study with Borges in 1933.



So great was Barrios' popularity in Caracas in 1932 that he was even used in an advertisement for a local brew, *Caracas Beer*.



On March 5, 1932 Barrios offered a fifth concert in the Municipal Theatre dedicated to the "ladies of Caracas":

- First Part:** 1. Lucia de Lammermoor-aria final (Donizetti)  
2. Mazurka Apasionada (Barrios)  
3. Coral (Haendel)  
4. Reverie (Schumann)

- Second Part:** 1. a) Preludio No. 7 (Chopin)  
b) Waltz in C Sharp Minor (Chopin)  
2. Cantos de España (Albéniz)  
3. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
4. Tarantella (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. Minuet (Beethoven)  
2. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

On March 7 Barrios journeyed to Maracay, a community about 70 kilometers west of Caracas, where he performed concerts. On March 12 he gave another concert in Caracas at the Municipal Theatre for the benefit of the Venezuelan Red Cross. On March 18 he offered the first of three concerts in the Teatro Ayacucho. The first one was dedicated to the "Italian community" and included the *Serenata Op. 6, No. 1* of Enrico Toselli (1883-1926) as well as *Tarantella*, *Potpourri Lírico* and *Danza Paraguaya*. The second concert on March 21 was dedicated to the "Spanish community" and featured music of Albéniz, Granados, Tárrega as well as Barrios' "Spanish compositions". For the finale of this concert Barrios performed the most well known joropo of all, *Alma Llanera* by Guitierrez, accompanied by Leoncio Narvarte on cuatro and Estatio Crespo on maracas. This work he would incorporate into his repertoire and perform many times in the ensuing years. Barrios completed the third concert on March 26, repeating *Alma Llanera*.

On March 30 he was the guest of honor at a special performance given by the *Quarteto Rios* ("Rios String Quartet") at the Ateneo in Caracas. This performance included *Interludium in Modo Antico* (Giadeynow), *Intermezzo* (Ipolitoff-Iwanow), *Nocturne* (Borodin) and the premiere performance of the piece *Fuga Criolla* ("Creole Fugue") by the Venezuelan composer Juan Bautista Plaza. Afterwards Barrios expressed his warm congratulations to Maestro Plaza and praised the members of the quartet. Gloria was presented with a bouquet of red roses. The Ateneo represented the "serious" side of the Caracas musical community and this event was their way of expressing their acceptance of and admiration for Barrios.



The following evening, he performed this concert at the Club Florida in Caracas:

**First Part:** 1. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne

2. Andante (Mozart)
3. a) Prelude (Chopin)  
b) Waltz (Chopin)
4. Polonesa (Arcas)
5. Minueto (Paderewsky)

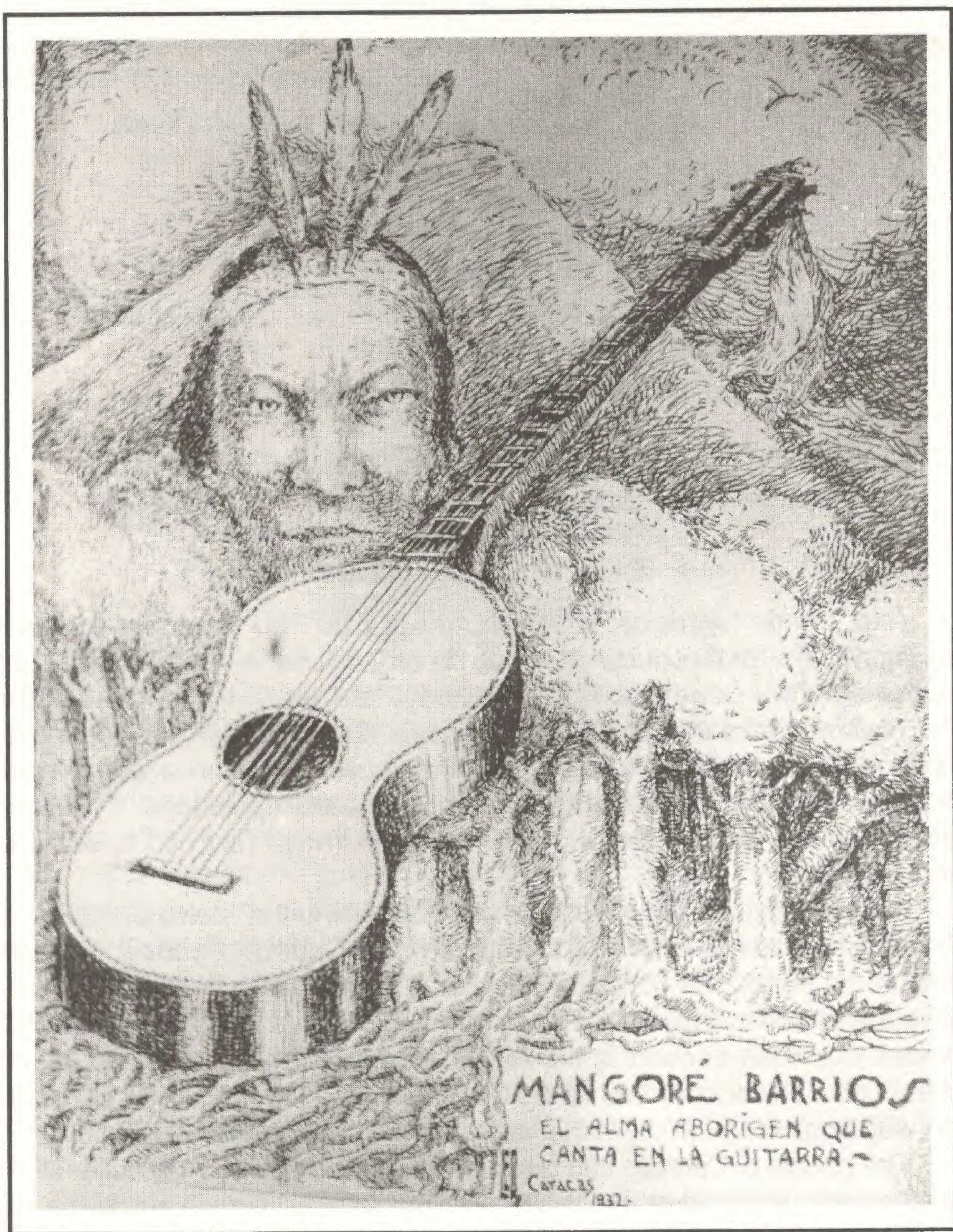
**Second Part:** 1. Fuente Morisca (Borges)  
2. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
3. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
4. Danza Paraguaya (Barrios)  
5. El Delirio (Arcas)  
6. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

After the performance, which started at 6:30 PM, there was a dance during which a seven course meal was served. A luncheon in Barrios' honor was given at this same Club Florida two days later on April 2, which featured "a good orchestra that played national airs. Sr. Juan Diaz played several joropos on the harp accompanied with maracas. This Venezuelan typical music was danced by Mamerto Garcia who was well applauded. The fiesta lasted until late in the afternoon when all those invited returned to Caracas very satisfied..."

Around this time Barrios played two concerts in the Teatro Lamas at La Guaira (some 20 kilometers from Caracas on the Caribbean coast). On April 7 and 9 he performed concerts in Caracas at the Teatro Bolivar. The April 9th appearance was his twenty-fourth concert! On April 14 he gave a special private afternoon concert at the Ateneo dedicated to its Director, Señora María Luisa de Escobar and to the Cuarteto Rios. On April 17 he played at the wedding reception of Margarita Cohen and Jaime Chonchol.

The people of Caracas had taken Barrios to their heart. A special "silver anniversary" program to celebrate his 25th concert (which would be his farewell appearance) was organized and took place on April 18 in the Municipal Theatre. In this performance Barrios played his most popular pieces, including a new original work entitled *Barcarola de los Recuerdos* as well as a new transcription of Chopin's *Waltz No. 3* in a minor. The Rios Quartet performed Plaza's *Fuga Criolla*. Raúl Borges also participated playing in duo with Barrios his tremolo piece *Fuente Morisca* as well as Mangoré's *Zapateado*. Leoncio Martinez read an original poem dedicated to Barrios entitled *Guitarra de America*. In *El Nuevo Diario* of April 18 Barrios expressed his appreciation to the people of Caracas:





From an admirer in Caracas, with the dedication "Mangoré Barrios. The indigenous soul that sings on the guitar".



Caracas!

A word that I have engraved in my soul with the same affection that I feel for "Guarany". Before departing your warm and gracious city where I have been accepted and my artistic labours have been amply rewarded in all the theatres in which I have performed, I want to express my appreciation.

Caracas!

I want to tell you that wherever my restless wandering takes me, when the first notes of my concerts are sounded, I will remember in my imagination this piece of America. Because of this, I want to express my eternal gratitude presenting myself in the third part of this great festival dressed in my typical costume of a guaraní chief and interpret *Alma Llanera*, which is the soul of the Venezuelan people.

To everyone a strong and sincere embrace of farewell and until soon,

Mangoré

In no other future scenarios would Barrios even approach duplicating the amazing success that he had enjoyed in Caracas over the past two months. As Barrios himself observed: "One must always keep in mind the factor of luck. I did not think it possible to give more than a half dozen concerts. I have been very fortunate." Four years later, after his return from Europe in March of 1936, Barrios again attempted to concertize in Caracas but was not able to repeat the success of his first visit. It was a very special time, and, upon departing Caracas, Barrios wrote the following poem on May 2:

#### The Departure of the Indian

To Caracas, the favored city  
Guacaipuro\*, my brother, it is the sad hour  
Of continuing the harsh road...  
But before, I bow my head with unction  
Thankful for the bread and salt that you gave me.

I asked you for shelter and you opened the door  
Of the ancestral mansion where, by the magic of destiny  
Your noble titan's body  
Alone dresses in glory.  
And so I am going to leave your soft bed,  
Letting loose a cry from the dispirited chest  
of the Indian who perhaps may never return.  
Brotherly Guacaipuro, sublime indian,

In your heart beats and groans  
The immense heart of the jungle!

(\*Indian name for Caracas)





Barrios with the Venezuelan painter Tito Salas at his country estate in Petare known as *El Taboso*. Salas painted the picture that appears on the cover of this book, which was an unfinished study for a portrait of Mangoré. In the top photo the two artists try out each other's artistic "equipment". The photo below was taken the same day with Gloria peeking over Agustin's right shoulder.



Leaving Caracas on May 4, Barrios journeyed to the town of Valencia, which was the first of several cities in western Venezuela that he planned to visit. Here he gave three concerts in the Municipal Theatre of Valencia and was planning to play more when he "suddenly became dangerously ill" and had to return to Caracas for treatment. It is not known specifically what this illness was, but it must have taken him some time to convalesce for there is no record of any concerts until September 3 and 4 in Barquisimeto. This may have been the first serious episode with the syphilis that purportedly was a complicating factor in his death twelve years later.

Some time after this Barrios terminated his relationship with Giuseppi Colloca and replaced him with one Pablo Machado (whose name is first mentioned in October 1932 and who would continue to work as Barrios' representative for the next year and a half until early 1934 in Mexico). Barrios continued his tour of western Venezuela (called *El Occidental*) in September-October, performing not only in Mérida, but also Carora,<sup>3</sup> Trujillo, Maracaibo and San Cristobal (October 15) before crossing the border into Colombia at Cucuta around October 20.<sup>4</sup> By October 24 he was in Pamplona heading south to Bogotá where on the 31st he offered a typical "press concert" in the foyer of the Teatro de Colon performing Bach's *Prelude and Fugue*, Sor's *Mozart Variations*, Chopin's *Nocturne* as well as his own *Capricho Español*, *Un Sueño en la Floresta* and *Diana Guaraní*. Barrios always invited not only the press to these abbreviated nonpublic performances, but also impresarios as well as prominent musical, political and intellectual figures. The Colombian composer Guillermo Uribe-Holguín, head of the National Conservatory of Music, attended this recital, and afterwards declared that "Mangoré is the reincarnated soul of the musical geniuses and never again will it be possible to hear an artist of such magnitude."

On November 3 Barrios gave another "press concert" and the following evening he made his debut in the Teatro de Colon to a "numerous concurrence" of public. He performed these works:

- First Part:** 1. Fantasía en Mi (Viñas)  
 2. Romanza (Napoleao)  
 3. Scherzo (Coste)  
 4. Moraima (Espinoza)

- Second Part:** 1. a) Bouree (Bach)  
 b) Courante (Bach)  
 2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
 3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
 4. Nocturne (Chopin)



- Third Part:** 1. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
 2. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
 3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
 4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

The following evening, November 5, he presented a second concert:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
 2. Confesión (Barrios)  
 3. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne  
 4. Capricho Español (Barrios)
- Second Part:** 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
 2. a) Prelude (Chopin)  
     b) Waltz No. 7 (Chopin)  
 3. Sad Song (Tchaikowsky)  
 4. Minuet (Paderewski)
- Third Part:** 1. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)  
 2. Contemplación (Barrios)  
 3. Cueca (Barrios)  
 4. Pot-pourri Lírico (Barrios)

Such was the success of these initial performances that on the following day, November 6, Barrios offered two more concerts at the Teatro de Colon, a matinee at 3:30 and an evening performance at 9:15. The critic of the *Mundo al Día* on November 7 observed that Barrios had "awakened an enthusiasm never seen before with the cultured, music loving public who admire the great geniuses of classical and modern music." A fifth concert took place on November 8:

- First Part:** 1. Andante Largo (Sor)  
 2. Romanza-imitación violoncello (Barrios)  
 3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
 4. Fiesta de la Luna Nueva (Barrios)
- Second Part:** 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
 2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
 3. Nocturne (Chopin)  
 4. Gran Fantasía de Concierto (Arcas)
- Third Part:** 1. Granada (Albéniz)  
 2. Zapateado (Barrios)  
 3. Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)  
 4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)



Here is the debut of *Fiesta de la Luna Nueva* (Celebration of the New Moon) another "Guaraní inspired" piece (which he also called *Invocación a la Luna*). On November 13 Barrios met the Columbian composer Emilio Murillo who played on the piano some of his original works which Barrios found "of ethnic character, full of color and originality...in my next concerts I will play some of these motives on my guitar." Barrios then gave three more concerts in Bogotá at the Teatro Faenza, one on November 15 and two on the 17th at 6 and 9:15 PM. In the concert at 6 Barrios made good on his word, offering an arrangement of Murillo's *El Guatecano*:

- First Part:** 1. Madrigal (Barrios)  
 2. Romanza (imitación violoncello) Barrios  
 3. Mazurka Apasionada (Barrios)  
 4. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne

- Second Part:** 1. Bouree (Bach)  
 2. Adagio Sostenuto (Beethoven)  
 3. a) Prelude (Chopin)  
     b) Waltz (Chopin)  
 4. Fantasía en la Menor (Arcas)

- Third Part:** 1. Granada (Albéniz)  
 2. Meditación (Tolsa)  
 3. El Guatecano (Murillo)  
 4. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)

On November 19 a hurricane hit Bogotá causing great destruction. Barrios came forward and offered his services and on November 25 a benefit concert was held in the Municipal Theatre for the victims of the disaster:

- First Part:** 1. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne  
 2. Contemplación (Barrios)  
 3. Vals No. 4 (Barrios)  
 4. Zapateado (Barrios)

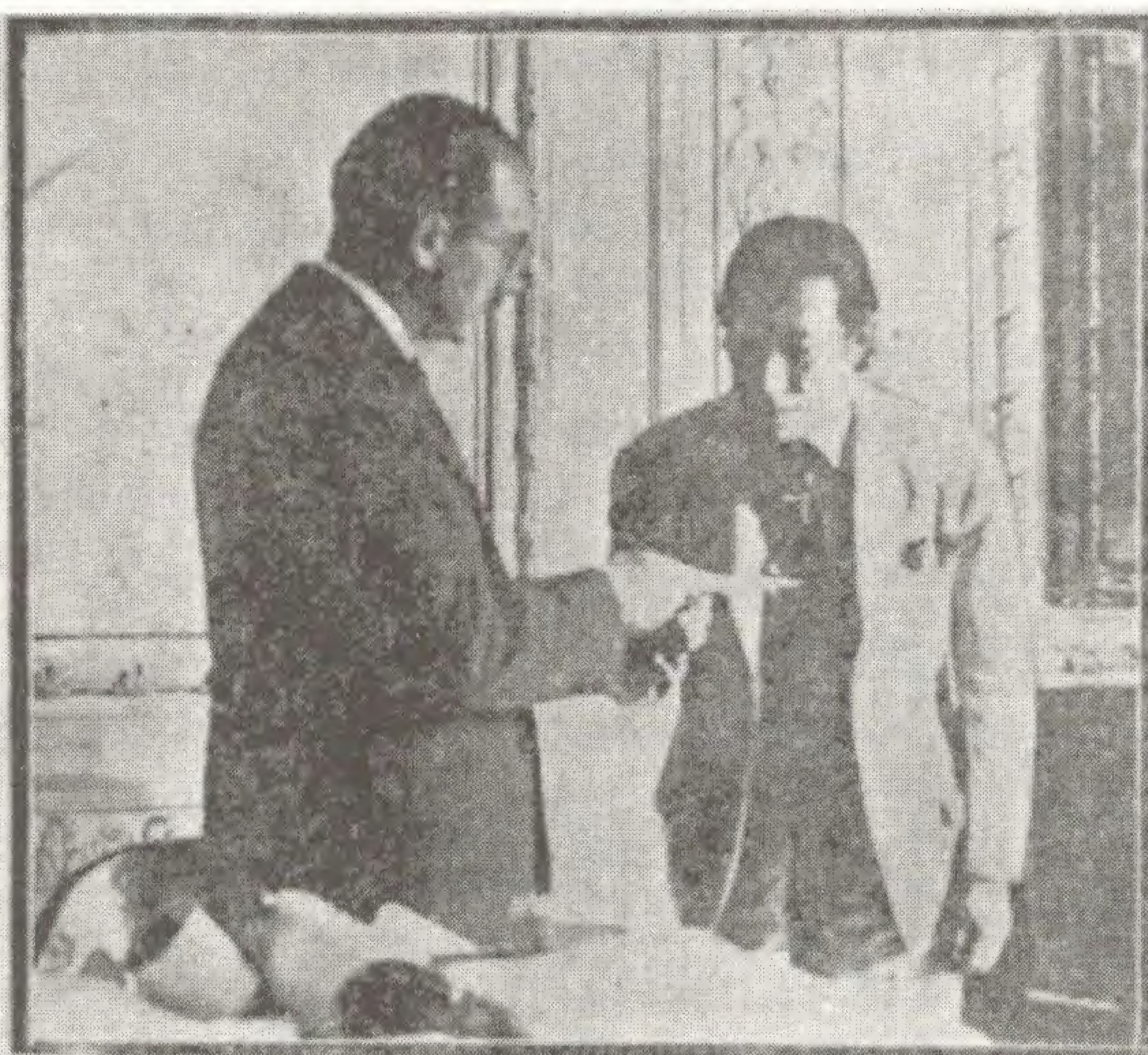
- Second Part:** 1. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
 2. Andante (Haydn)  
 3. Minuet (Paderewsky)  
 4. Allegro Brillante (Barrios)

- Third Part:** 1. El Guatecano (Murillo)  
 2. Intermezzo No. 1 (Calvo)  
 3. El Poema del Rancho-bambuco (Murillo)  
 4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)



In addition to *El Guatecano* of Emilio Murillo, Barrios had by this time completed his arrangement of another Murillo piece (*El Poema del Rancho* utilizing the typical Columbian rhythm *bambuco*) as well as the *Intermezzo No. 1* by nationalist composer Luis A. Calvo. Before leaving Columbia he would arrange yet another of Murillo's pieces — *El Trapiche* — as well as two selections by Columbian composer P. Morales Pino — *Divagación* and *Iris*. On November 30 and December 1 Barrios performed two concerts in the city of Tunja, some 140 kilometers north of Bogotá, where due to the insistence of the public, he had to repeat Murillo's *El Guatecano*!

Barrios had attained a wide popularity in Bogotá, such that on the evening of November 24 he played live on the air his *Diana Guaraní* for Radio Mundo HJ3ABG. During the five weeks that he was in Bogotá, Barrios gave



EL MAGO DE LA GUITARRA, Barrios Mangoré, artista que entre nosotros se ha captado las mejores simpatías, tuvo el bello gesto de ofrecer en días pasados un concierto dedicando su producto íntegro a los damnificados en el aguacero que tantos desastres causó el sábado antepasado. Esta instantánea fue tomada hoy por nuestro repórter gráfico en el momento en que el artista ponía en manos del secretario general de la alcaldía de Bogotá, el cheque por la suma obtenida en el beneficio de que damos cuenta. . . .

From Bogotá, December 2, 1932. Barrios performed a benefit concert on November 25 for the victims of a hurricane that struck November 19. Here he is seen presenting a check of the proceeds from the event to the General Secretary of the Municipality of Bogotá.



a total of 17 concerts,<sup>5</sup> the last two occurring on December 4. On December 6 Agustín and Gloria, accompanied by Pablo Machado, departed Bogotá and evidently had the idea of travelling south to Ecuador, passing through Girardot on December 14, spending the year end holidays in this southwestern region of Columbia. On January 24, 1933 Barrios was in Popayan, the southernmost point he would reach before turning around and heading northward to Cali.<sup>6</sup>



On the streets of Bogotá with Gloria, December 1932.

By March of 1933 they had made it to Panama, where Barrios performed for the President, Don Abdiel Arias, at a special gala banquet (see page 141 for a photo of this event). He obviously gave some performances in Panama City, but no record of such has been located.



The following month they arrived in Costa Rica. On April 18, 1933 in the National Theatre Barrios gave a "typical" concert:

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
2. Cueca-danza chilena (Barrios)  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne

- Second Part:** 1. Gavotte (Bach)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
4. Nocturne in Eb (Chopin)

- Third Part:** 1. Granada (Albéniz)  
2. Sonatina (Tárrega)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

This was followed by three more concerts in the National Theatre on April 20, 22 and 23<sup>7</sup> in which, in addition to his "core" repertoire, he would perform his arrangements of *Alma Llanera*, Calvo's *Intermezzo No. 1* as well as Murillo's *El Guatecano*. The popular *Skater's Waltz* (*Les Patineurs*) by French composer Emil Waldteufel (1837-1915) debuted at this time.

After finishing the four concerts in San José, Barrios played in numerous towns on Costa Rica's *meseta central* ("central tableland"), such as Heredia and Alajuela, as well as in Cartago, where Señor Juan de Dios Trejos attended two concerts on May 1 and 2 in the Apollo Movie Theatre and forty-one years later reminisced about the event:

When I first saw the announcements for Barrios' concert in Cartago, I thought it would be some kind of clown doing parodies on the works of the great masters for the poster announced works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and so on. I went with a sense of pessimism. But upon hearing the magic of this man's playing, I was enthralled! Barrios was a true magician of the guitar and a magnificent musician!

Seven years later Trejos would meet Barrios again in San Salvador and become a close friend and pupil, having almost daily contact with him during his last years. Barrios liked Costa Rica and remained there until the end of June giving 32 performances in San José and surrounding towns. He had made good friends with Francisco Salazar, an architect who was a guitar aficionado. Five years later he would be back in Costa Rica and Salazar would be his principal supporter, allowing Barrios the use of a house rent-free for nearly a year.



# Gratitud

## homenaje a don abdiel arias y sra.



Un aspecto del homenaje que el sábado 18 se ofreció en el Club Unión al Presidente de la Institución, don Abdiel Arias, y a su cuita y bella esposa doña Dora Arosemena de Arias. En primera línea aparecen doña Rosario Guardia de Arias, la primera dama de la República al lado del agasajado, señor Arias. En el fondo aparece el Presidente

de la República, doctor Harmodio Arias, al lado de doña Dora. El Ministro Davis, siempre tan popular, don Enrique A. Jiménez, el doctor Méndez Pereira y otras personalidades de nuestro gran mundo se ven con claridad en la fotografía. Mangoré, el guirrieta genial, también se contaba entre los asistentes.

Wherever Barrios went he socialized with Presidents and high government officials. Here he is seen in February of 1933 as a special guest at a dinner honoring the President of Panama, Don Abdiel Arias.



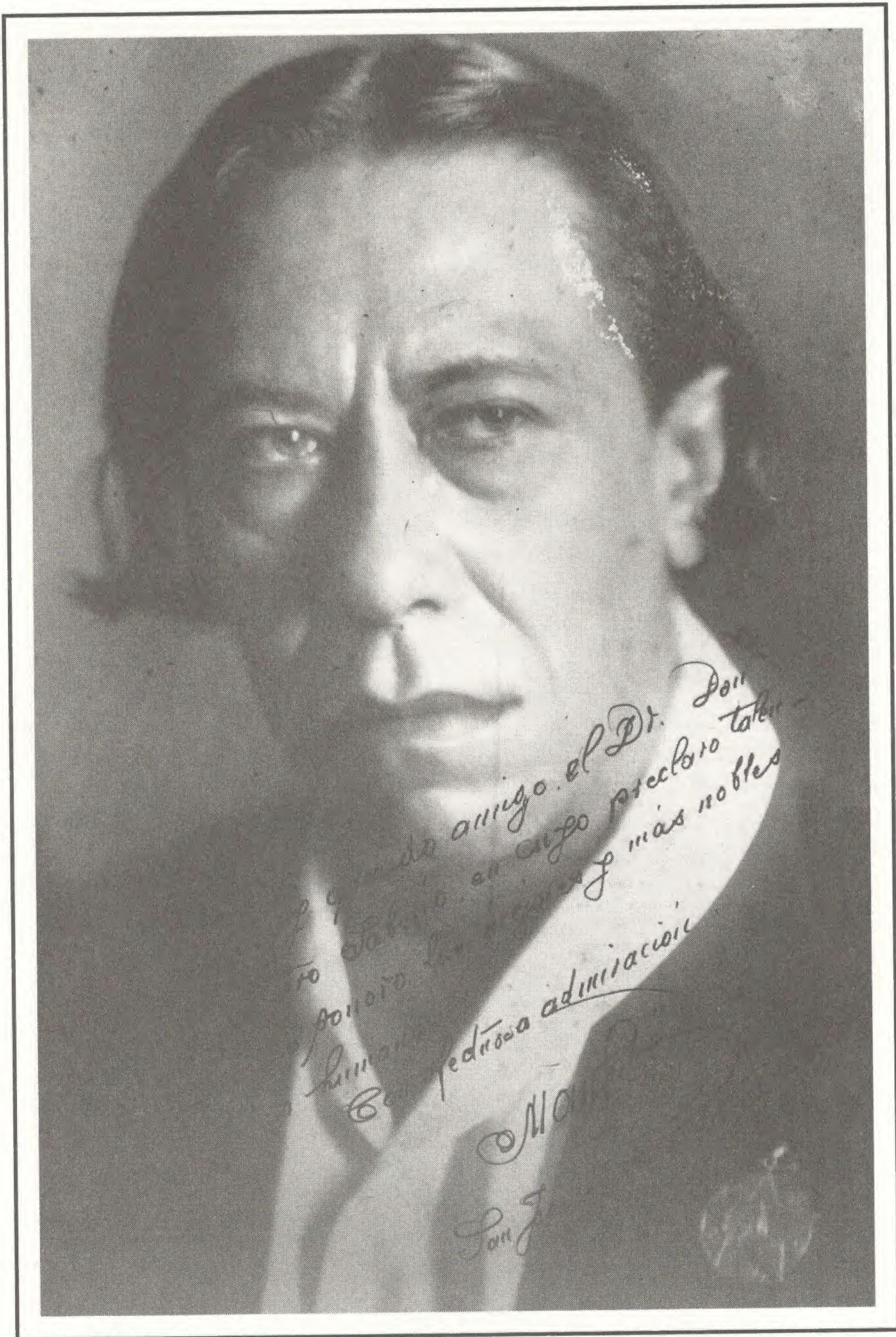


Photo dated April 28, 1933, San José, Costa Rica.



# Teatro APOLO

HOY! LUNES 1º DE MAYO, HOY!

A LAS 8.30 P. M. - HORA FIJA

Grandioso Acontecimiento Artístico!

Una sola audición de guitarra por el soberbio

## INDIO GUARANI

El  
Paganine  
de la  
Guitarra



MANGORE  
El poeta de la guitarra

El alma  
aborigen  
que canta  
en la  
Guitarra

Oyendo a MANGORE el espíritu se extasia y nos hace recordar nuestra primera ilusión amada.

El artista aclamado por todos los públicos del mundo como algo sobrenatural. Consagrado por la crítica más severa como único en su género.

*El grandioso artista MANGORE ha efectuado una serie de 14 conciertos en San José con un éxito sin precedentes.*

*Antes de abandonar Costa Rica de donde tan gran recuerdo lleva, ofrecerá una sola audición en la "Ciudad Amigable" para que el igual de las grandes capitales de todo el mundo pueda satisfacer de haber admirado a un genial artista, lógico e indiscutible regala de América.*

### PROGRAMA

#### PRIMERA PARTE

- Vihay... 1. Fantasia inspirada al piano  
MANGORE 2. Cacha (danza Chilena.)  
Waldesfel... 3. Los patineurs  
MANGORE 4. Capricho español

#### SEGUNDA PARTE

- Bach... 5. Contraste  
Beethoven... 6. Minueto  
Mozart-Sora... 7. La Viole mágica (tema variado.)  
Chopin... 8. Nocturno en mi bemol

#### TERCERA PARTE

- Celbulka... 9. Gavota romántica  
MANGORE 10. Zapateado  
11. Un sueño en la foresta  
12. Diano guaraní

Disfrute de dos horas de agradable esparcimiento espiritual oyendo las mágicas interpretaciones de este genio. Quien oiga a este prodigioso Indio jamás lo olvidará.

**PRECIOS:** Palco, Luneta y Platea **₡ 1.00** - Galería **₡ 0.50**

Oír a MANGORE es sólo escuchar. Es una sola audición la que dará MANGORE. Vea pero que vive una guitarra MANGORE se lo hará ver. Escuche quien no acuda a escuchar a MANGORE. El que no oye a MANGORE no sabe lo que pierde. No se lamenta de no haber asistido al concierto de MANGORE. Nada más que una audición dará en Cartago MANGORE.

IMPRESA TORMA

Program from Cartago, Costa Rica, May 1, 1933.



BOYACA  
\$1.50  
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# T. Nacional

— EMPRESA VIEYTES —

Viernes 7 de Julio de 1933

BALCON  
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COTON

## Primer Concierto Popular

A las 9  
de la  
noche en  
punto



Nuevo  
y  
selecto  
programa

Por el prodigioso guitarrista Guaraní

## MANGORE

LA GUITARRA— bajo el mágico hechizo de sus manos milagrosas— se convierte en una maravillosa sinfonia orquestal, Policroma y Sublime. Y en el apogeo glorioso surge en fantasías múltiples y regias, toda el alma de la América criolla que, cante o llore, sueñe o sufra, se expresa en armonías nunca oídas.

### :: PROGRAMA ::

#### PRIMERA PARTE

Tolza  
Térraga  
Mangoré  
Canto

I REVERIE  
II Capricho Arabe  
III Confesión  
IV Estudio No. 23

#### SEGUNDA PARTE

Bach  
Haydn  
Granados  
Mangoré

V Loure  
VI Andante  
VII Danza No. 5  
VIII Rapsodia Española

#### TERCERA PARTE

Haydn  
Mangoré  
Gutiérrez  
Arcas

IX El Tancito (Bilicorne)  
X No. Vals  
XI Alma Llanera (joropo venezolano)  
XII Gran fantasía en la menor

### EXTRA

Mangoré—DIANA GUARANI (A petición general)

### PRECIOS POPULARES

Boleto de palco sin número / 1.50  
Boleto numerado .. 1.50  
Boleto alto numerado .. 1.00  
Lunch Alta .. 0.50  
Gaseña .. 0.30

Mañana 2º concierto. Domingo 9 - 2 conciertos a las 10 y 30 a. m. y 9 p. m. - Nuevos y variados programas en cada concierto.

—: Imprenta El Diario del Salvador —

Program from the National Theatre, San Salvador, July 7, 1933



From Costa Rica they travelled to El Salvador, where on July 1, 1933, Barrios performed at the National Theatre in San Salvador:<sup>9</sup>

- First Part:** 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
2. Cueca (Barrios)  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne

- Second Part:** 1. Gavotte (Bach)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
4. Nocturne in Eb (Chopin)

- Third Part:** 1. Granada (Albéniz)  
2. Sonatina (Tárrega)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

Barrios gave numerous concerts in El Salvador during the six weeks that he was there in July 1933. He played in outlying towns such as Santa Tecla, Abuachapán, Sonsonate and Santa Ana. On July 20 Barrios gave a benefit concert for the Rosales Hospital which featured the national anthems of El Salvador and Paraguay:

- First Part:** Salvadorean National Anthem (Aberle)  
1. Oración de la Tarde (Barrios)  
2. Mazurka Apasionada (Barrios)  
3. Tres Jolie-waltz (Waldteufel)  
4. Lucia de Lammermoor-aria final (Donizetti)

- Second Part:** Paraguayan National Anthem  
1. Fugue (Bach)  
2. Canzonetta (Mendelssohn)  
3. Nocturne (Chopin)  
4. Minuet (Paderewsky)

- Third Part:** 1. Confesión de Amor (Barrios)  
2. Las Abejas-estudio (Barrios)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

The waltz *Tres Jolie* by Waldteufel debuts in this concert and *Las Abejas* reappears after an absence of many years (the *Allegro Brillante* that Barrios



played quite often may have been another name he used for *Las Abejas*, but it may also refer to the *Estudio de Concierto*, or perhaps even a completely different piece altogether).

In an interview that appeared in the San Salvadorean daily *La Prensa* of July 12, 1933, Barrios observed the following about the arts in Latin America:

Throughout the Americas at this time there is a tendency of nationalism. This is observed in South and Central America. In Mexico, from what I understand, the nationalistic feeling is more profound. We are now tired of imitations, and we are returning to that which is ours. Europe indisputably is headed toward decadence while we are on the way to scaling great heights. America has a brilliant future and this is seen manifested in the arts, in literature, sculpture, the pictographic arts and music.

Beginning about April of 1933 in Costa Rica, the name Agustín Barrios is nowhere to be seen on any program or in any newspaper article — Nitsuga Mangoré had now completely taken over as the public identity of the artist. Barrios felt himself part of the “nationalistic movement” that had developed and matured throughout Iberoamerica since the turn of the century. He was proud of asserting his “Guaraní Indian identity” and felt great strength in proclaiming it even though it was a bit of an exaggerated fabrication. He was totally confident in his abilities and convinced of the ultimate value of his art. He was *himself*, with his dual talents as virtuoso guitarist and composer, and no one on the international guitar scene (especially Segovia) could be compared to him. Since the appearance in 1930 of the character, Nitsuga Mangoré had received continual acceptance and validation from the publics of Brazil, Venezuela, Columbia, Panama and Costa Rica who felt and shared the “American personality”. At the time that he made these remarks he was at the height of this identity. By 1936 he had reconciled the two personalities, using from that point on simply “Barrios Mangoré”.

By early August they were in Tegucigalpa, Honduras where Barrios played four concerts, the last being on August 19 in the Teatro Clámer. A special concert for Nicaragua’s President Tiburcio Carias was given on August 20 at the Presidential Palace featuring *La Catedral*, Beethoven’s *Minuet*, Chopin’s *Nocturne*, Czibulka’s *Gavota Romántica*, and Waldteufel’s *Skater’s Waltz*, finishing with *Contemplación* and *Diana Guaraní*. He also played in La Ceiba and San Pedro Sula where, in an article that appeared August 29 in the *Diario Comercial*, he stated: “I have about a hundred works that I have composed, and every day I devote several hours to composition. I have no preference for a particular composer. I admire Beethoven and Chopin, and I consider them true musical geniuses. I try to interpret them the best that I can.” He continued by declaring that “If I go to the United





Wearing a "guarani frac", these pictures (above and on the next page) were taken in Mexico in 1934. This may have been a costume Barrios wore at higher, cooler altitudes, such as Mexico City.







States I have my mind made up to make my entrance in the State of Arizona. There are my indian brothers and I want to visit them and play for them. I will charge nothing for my playing since I shall be going to them bringing greetings from my race to the brother race." Barrios definitely wanted to visit the United States, and as he moved northward it loomed larger in his mind as a realistic goal.

Barrios then returned to El Salvador and played two concerts on September 9 and 10 in the National Theatre in San Salvador.<sup>10</sup> He departed immediately for Guatemala and played a concert on September 14 at the Teatro Palace in Guatemala City. During this time, when Barrios was performing exclusively in his bare-chested, befeathered Nitsuga identity, the stage many times would be draped with palm leaves and bamboo to create a more "exotic" atmosphere. A critic for the Guatemalan paper *Nuestro Diario* observed:

In front, a corral of bamboo and two house palms. Mangoré presents himself with feathers. An anachronism. Something for children. His costume goes with the bamboo, but not with the guitar.

The reception by the public is cold and silent, with ironic comments: "horrendous", "stupendous", "shocking", "he's on marijuana", etc., etc.

The Indian sits, strokes his instrument in a strangely smooth manner and begins. The program does not seem to be in agreement with the situation — it indicates that the indian feels he is a musician, and that he wants to give the best he can, but, my God! That savage wants to play Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin on the guitar! It seems a sacrilege. We expect a disaster, a fatal musical calamity.

He plays a *Serenata Morisca* of his own composition. On the mark. Another of his compositions, andante and allegretto. Notable. A Chilean dance. The enthusiasm mounts. Little by little the audience warms up.

The guitar becomes a piano, violin, flute, mandolin, drum. There is nothing that this man can't do on the guitar. At times it seems the guitar plays itself...

The applause grows, and increases with each piece until at the end of the performance the public is shouting "encore" to which he replies "thank you", simply "thank you".



Another critic from *El Liberal Progresista*, hearing this same performance, observed:

The first part of the program is made up of his own compositions, of which *La Catedral* and the *Cueca* are enough in themselves to validate him not only as a profound exponent of instrumental technique, but also as a musician of exquisite sensibility and artful imagination. The guitar, that instrument of such poor resources, a rebel like this indian, seems to have become docile in the agile, caressing hands of this man of the pampas. Strange sonorities, unexpected shadings, delicate pizzicatos barely audible all communicate a sensation of perfect mastery of the guitar.

Mangoré is more interpreter and virtuoso than he is composer, but this is not to say that his compositions are bad; on the contrary, there is in them delicacy and good taste, but perhaps too much of a tendency towards the picturesque and the excessively romantic. As an instrumentalist he is better.

Mangoré's art would benefit if he would eliminate capricious sensationalism. One must not forget that a guitar is only a guitar.

Barrios remained in Guatemala until the end of September (perhaps longer). He then traveled north to Mexico, arriving in late 1933. The tremolo piece *Canción de la Hilandera* ("Song of the Thread Spinner") was written at this time (dedicated to Heriberto Lazcano). At some point he ended his relationship with Pablo Machado. On March 4, 1934 in the Teatro Regis in Mexico City he gave this concert:

- First Part:** 1. Study in Bb (Sor)  
2. Polaca Fantástica (Arcas)  
3. Mazurka Apasionada (Barrios)  
4. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne

- Second Part:** 1. Gavota en Rondó (Bach)  
2. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
3. Momento Musical (Schubert)  
4. Minuet (Paderewski)

- Third Part:** 1. Torre Bermeja (Albéniz)  
2. Study in A Major (Tárrega)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Gran Jota (Tárrega-Mangoré)



Here for the first time is seen Albéniz's *Torre Bermeja*, Sor's *Study in Bb, Op. 29, No. 1* as well as Tárrega's "Alard study". The *Gran Jota* is listed as "Tárrega-Mangoré" and reflects the fact that Barrios' variations used the Tárrega version as a point of departure for his own ideas. According to Mexican composer Juan Helguera, Barrios played concerts in the State of Hidalgo in "Pachuca and other diverse towns and made great friendships" wherever he went. He attempted to obtain a visa to enter the United States but was not successful. Morpeau states that Barrios "lost money because he could not fulfill a contract seeing as how he would not go to a country where his black Brazilian wife could not enter." Godoy states that neither Barrios nor Gloria had passports and that this was the reason they were denied visas to enter the United States.

Barrios presented himself in concert in Mexico City two times in his bare chested, befeathered Cacique Mangoré costume. Then he met fellow countryman Don Tomás Salomoni who was the Paraguayan Ambassador to Mexico. He persuaded Barrios to cease his characterization as Nitsuga Mangoré because it "was not dignified and appropriate." Boettner claims that "in Mexico Barrios was well received, the critics were favorable, even though he was in a difficult situation, because in that epoch the great Segovia was concertizing in Mexico."<sup>11</sup> Barrios had found in Salomoni another "patron" relationship. Barrios and Gloria moved in with the Salomonis (who had six children—3 daughters and 3 sons—one of whom, Tomás Jr., was studying at the Lasalle Institute of Malonne, Belgium).

Salomoni was quite dedicated to helping Barrios further his career. He knew that Barrios must go to Europe. As he was planning to visit his son and eldest daughter (who resided in Brussels), the time was right for Barrios to visit Europe. In July the Salomonis and the Barrioses embarked from Vera Cruz to Havana, Cuba where they remained for approximately two months. Barrios was a "great artistic success" in the presentations he made in Havana. In September they sailed for Europe on the steamship Orinoco.

Chief Nitusga Mangoré had been retired, thus ending the epoch of "the Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay". Returning to the formal "tie and tails" tuxedo, he was finally headed for "the old world" which Segovia had advised him to visit thirteen years earlier!

Agustín, Gloria and the Salomonis arrived in Brussels, Belgium in September of 1934. They remained there for several weeks, during which time Barrios met and made friends with Igor Stravinsky.<sup>12</sup> He also played a concert at the Royal Conservatory of Music. He was quite nervous about this as Segovia had been in Belgium three months before. Before the learned professors of the conservatory, he presented in the first half works of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, etc., which did not impress them (according to Boettner, they "yawned"). But in the second part he presented his own works: *Diana Guaraní*, *Un Sueño en la Floresta*, *Fiesta de la Luna Nueva* and so on. "Upon ending the concert, the critics shouted 'Bravo!' This was





Don Tomás Salomoni, Barrios' great friend and patron.

possibly his greatest artistic triumph." Trejos confirmed that Barrios did indeed feel that this was his "finest hour". The proceeds from this concert went to support the victims of the Chaco War which had been raging between Paraguay and Bolivia for over two years.

Tomás Salomoni rented an apartment in Berlin where for approximately fifteen months the Barrioses and the Salomonis lived. Zuni Salomoni, the youngest daughter, was 12 years old at the time and recalls that "in this apartment there was an organ and al-

ways on the morning of our birthdays Mangoré would awaken us children with music he would improvise on this organ. Sometimes, to entertain us, he would take his guitar and put it up behind his head and play it that way." She also recalls that "when he and Gloria would go out in Berlin, Mangoré wore a black cape with red lining and this, with his shoulder length hair, accompanied by a mulatto woman, caused people to turn and stare. This always made Mangoré very angry."

Part of this time Salomoni was coming and going from Geneva, Switzerland where he was part of a legation involved with mediating the Chaco War. In all the time that Barrios was in Berlin, he never performed even one concert. For some reason, the connections with professional impresarios were not made. Perhaps there was a bit of discrimination involved on the part of his German hosts. Whatever the reasons, all that is known for sure is that he played on some radio broadcasts. He did play in a concert on March 3, 1935 at the Venezuelan Consulate in Brussels. Salomoni and Barrios also reputedly made a visit to Paris during this year.<sup>13</sup>





With the Salomonis, just before disembarking in Havana, Cuba, 1934.

The oldest son Tomás R. Salomoni recalled that Barrios “had a great respect for my father, but, he did not permit any interruptions during his practicing, which could last ten to twelve hours with him shut up in his room, refusing food, until his practicing was finished. Barrios was very reserved but with me he wasn’t so much, to the point where he would permit me to interrupt him in his concentration on his instrument. Being a youngster, I had no tolerance for listening to hours and hours of classical music, and I entered into his room and expressed to him: ‘Agustín, I am tired of listening to classical music...doesn’t always doing the same thing bore you...I want to hear some of our music’ and then he would begin playing Paraguayan music, which I noted brought him great satisfaction from the expression on his face. Normally Barrios was happy though he had his ups and downs and he wielded satire with a well developed Paraguayan sense of humor, which he celebrated with great laughter, the majority of the times taking himself as the butt of his jokes, as, for example, he said: “En América sífilis, en Europa no filiz” (“In America syphilis, in Europe not happy” — this loses its grace in translation but the play on the suffixes “-is” and “-iz” is quite clever).

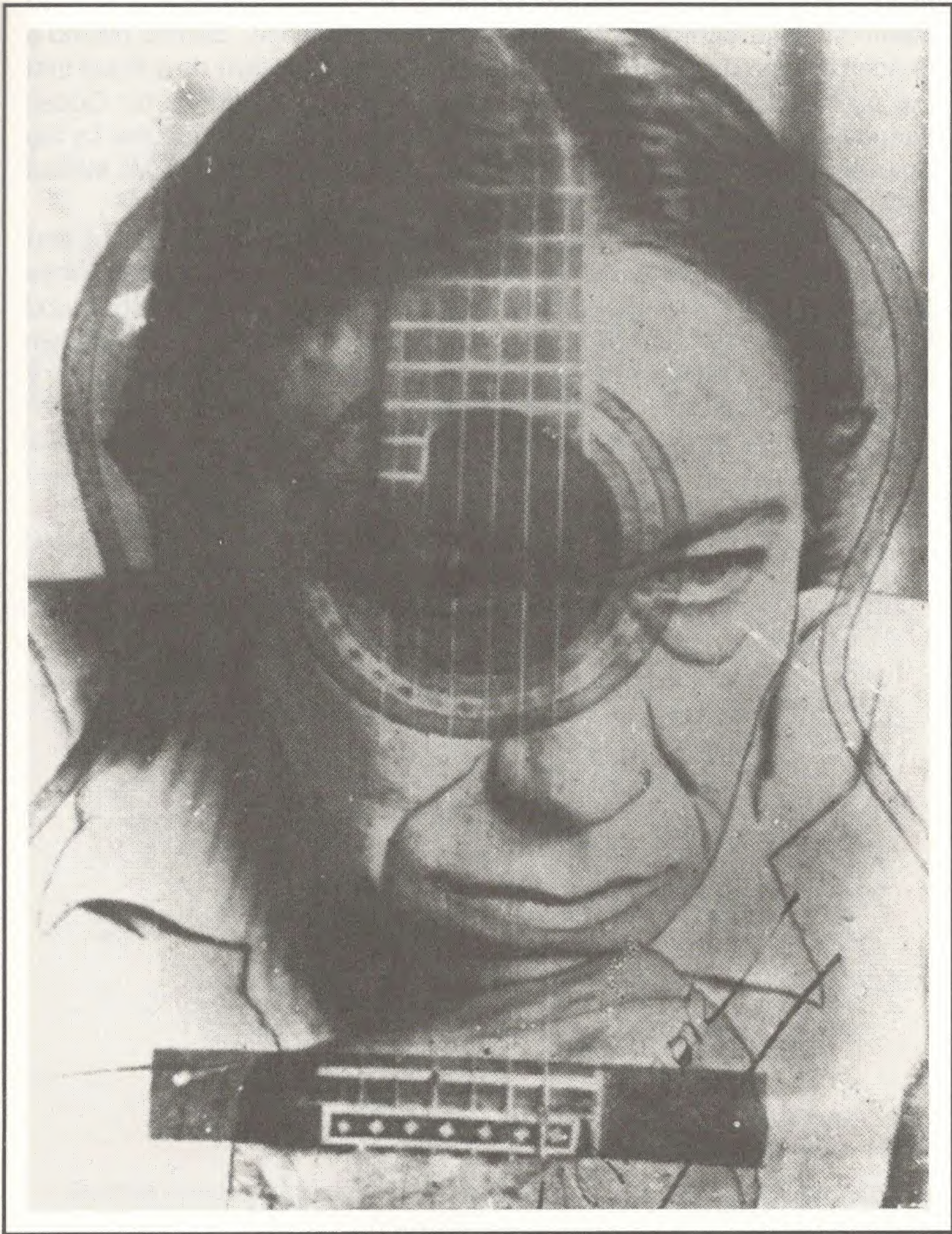
In early December 1935 the Salomonis and the Barrioses sailed from the port of Hamburg on the liner Cap Nort and proceeded to Lisbon, Portugal. Here Agustín and Gloria disembarked, and, saying their good-byes to the Salomonis, continued on to Madrid where they spent Christ-





The Barrioses and the Salomonis touring Europe, 1935.





This photo was taken in Madrid and the idea of the superimposition over the guitar – with his own eye appearing in the soundhole – was based on García Lorca's poem *El Polifermo de Oro*.



mas.<sup>14</sup> The Salomonis returned to Paraguay. Before separating, Tomás Salomoni gave Barrios six months financial sustenance. Barrios played a concert in Madrid, and met such luminaries as Regino Sáinz de la Maza and the poet Federico García Lorca.<sup>15</sup> He also reputedly played for Queen Victoria Eugenia, wife of Alfonso XIII who presented him with a guitar by the Spanish maker Morant, which is today in the Guzmán Museum in San Salvador.

At that time the Spanish Civil War was just about ready to start and everything was in upheaval. Seeing the lack of professional opportunities and feeling concern for their safety, Barrios and Gloria departed Spain and headed back to the New World. History had overtaken him, cheating him of the chance of obtaining the success in Europe that his talent merited.



## CHAPTER 5:

# THE LAST YEARS

**I**n February 1936 Gloria and Agustín arrived in Caracas where he gave a benefit concert on February 27 for the Student Federation. This was followed by another benefit concert on March 7 for "the injured of February 14" (perhaps the victims of another hurricane).

They did not stay long in Caracas for on March 19, 1936 Barrios presented a concert in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad in the Royal Victoria Institute. On April 8 in the town of San Fernando, Trinidad, Barrios gave this concert with two of his old friends from four years earlier:

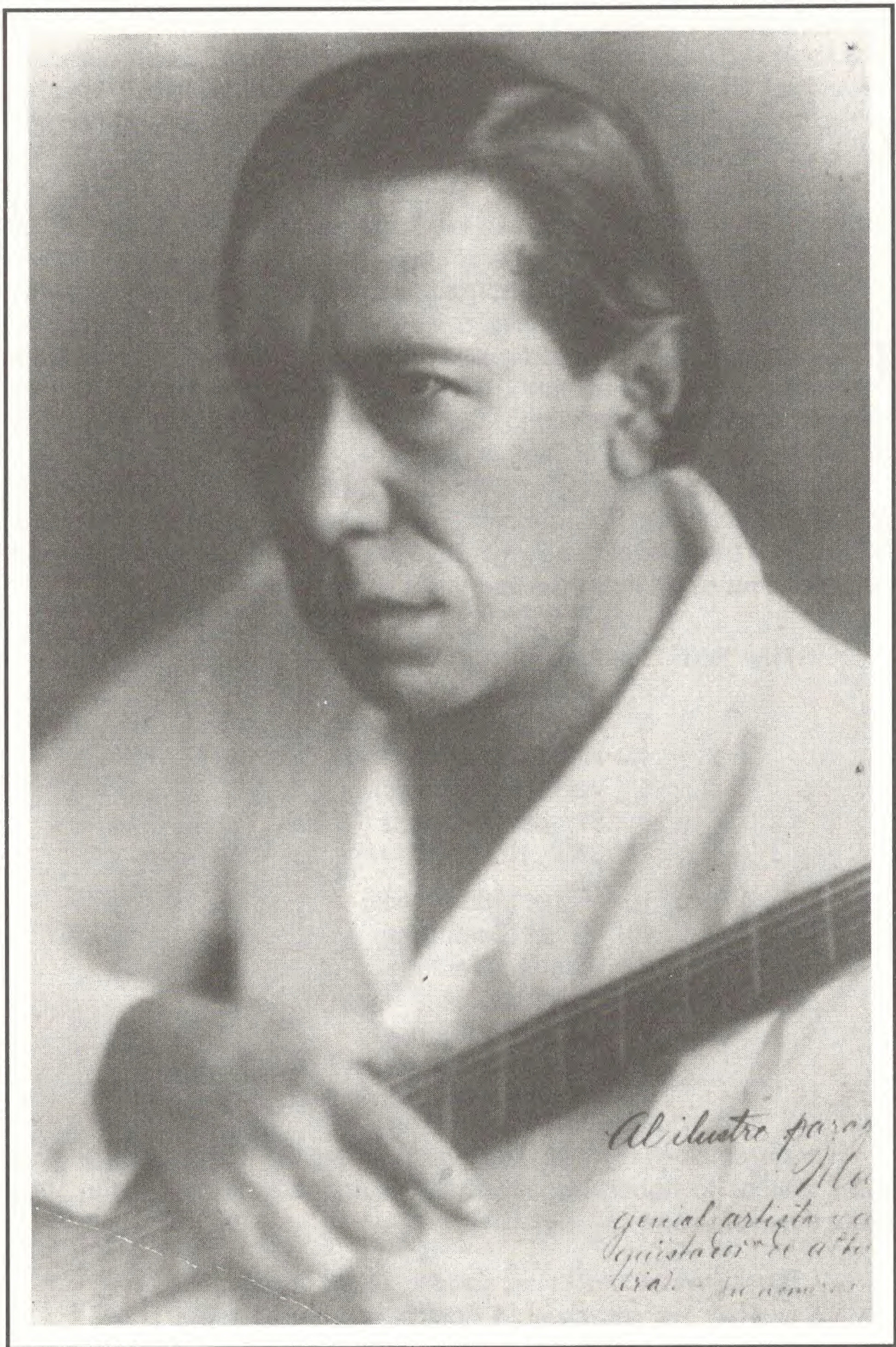
- First Part:**
1. Andantino (Sor)
  2. Reverie (Tolsa)
  3. Allegro Brillante (Barrios)
  4. Violin Solo by Mr. McD. Carpenter
  5. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)
  6. Serenata Española (Malats)
  7. Study No. 22 (Coste)

- Second Part:**
1. Minuet (Paderewski)
  2. Minuet (Beethoven)
  3. Miserere (Verdi)
  4. Violin Solo
  5. Bicho Feo (Barrios)
  6. A Dream in the Forest (Barrios)
  7. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

Barrios remained in Trinidad for over 4 months. During this time he gave guitar lessons to Robert Edgeworth Johnstone, who reminisced in 1985 about the encounter:

Barrios was a small man, slender, shy in manner, and very modest. We conversed in French, because he spoke little English and I spoke no Spanish. I asked him if I could have some lessons. He was quite ready to teach me. So far as I know, he didn't have to advertise for pupils. I was his only





Barrios circa 1936.



pupil, because he didn't set out to teach. He used to talk to me about technique and play a bit himself. One of the pieces was a guitar transcription of the *Serenata Española* by Malats. I played my pieces and he would tell me what I was doing wrong. Then we would talk a bit. And then I would get him to play. Once he played one of the quick Chopin waltzes, and it was fantastic. He told me it had taken him ten years to learn.

But Barrios was obviously not a teacher. One had to get the information out of him by seeing what he did and then asking him about it. He corrected me—I was doing a lot of things wrong, which he put right. It was just a good technique, but I don't remember anything unusual about it. By watching the way he did it one learnt a great deal, but one had to drag out of him *how* he did it, because in some cases he almost didn't know. He hadn't thought about it. It was an education to be with him. Apart from that, he was a very nice person.

For a time we hoped he would stay in Trinidad. He remained there for several months. I don't know where he lived in Port-of-Spain; we met at the Queen's Park Hotel for the lessons. He was a rather quiet player; he didn't aim at volume. I don't know whether it was his guitar or his technique, or what it was. I can say only at the time I found it very satisfactory. If a good manager had gotten hold of him, he should have been a world figure. A world composer, too. I think possibly he was a bit secretive. Certainly he was not a man to push his own affairs or drive forward. But he was at least contented. He had no complaints about not being recognised. I didn't detect any of that sort of attitude.

In August Barrios was again in Venezuela. By September he was back in *El Occidental* in Barquisimeto.<sup>1</sup> He remained in Venezuela for an extended period but did not play anywhere near the number of concerts as in 1932. At this time Raúl Borges tried unsuccessfully to interest the Venezuelan government in hiring Barrios as a professor of guitar.<sup>2</sup>

It is quite possible that they visited Puerto Rico at this time. The next reference puts him in the Dominican Republic the following year on March 22, 1937, where he spent over three months, crossing into Haiti in July where he gave a concert in Port-au-Prince on the 18th. Barrios stayed in the home of Pierre Moraviah Morpeau who, in his monogram entitled *Evocación a Agustín Barrios*, described their time together:



We lived an intimate friendship. During the day, or in the late hours of the evening, in the garden of my ancestral home, for my father, my mother, and all of my family, who loved music, Mangoré played pieces evocative of Paraguayan nights and of the enchantment of his home.

In early October Barrios and Gloria departed Haiti on a Cuban gunship which Morpeau had arranged through his diplomatic contacts. They arrived in Havana on October 4 where Barrios declared "I am realizing a tour of the Antilles, after having performed in several countries of Europe, making known my compositions and those of other composers based on Indo-American folkloric motifs, which are quite popular and have caused a kind of musical revolution in the European scene. To the beautiful and congenial Havana, I will offer my Art."



Costa Rica, 1939. Seated to Barrios' left is Francisco "Chisco" Salazar, a great friend and admirer.

Barrios spent 6 months in Cuba. In Havana, on January 28, 1938, he wrote one of his finest pieces, the *Preludio* subtitled "Saudade" (which a year and a half later in El Salvador he would add to *La Catedral*). The Barrioses departed Cuba in late March. It is assumed that they went to Mexico but no corroboration of this has yet been found.







# TEATRO NACIONAL

Miércoles 29 de Marzo de 1939

## RECITAL DE GUITARRA

por el genial virtuoso paraguayo



A Mangore  
con introducción y arpa  
Juan Manuel

**NITSUGA MANGORE**

82322 Imp. Universal

# PROGRAMA

9:00

A las 9 p. m. en punto

I

Dos estudios:  
N.º 8: Scherzando.—N.º 22.

Allegro vivace, ..... Coste

La Catedral { a) Andante religioso Mangoré  
b) Allegretto .....

Danza Mora ..... Tarrega

Polo y Soleá. (De la Suite Andaluza) ..... Parga

II

Minueto ..... Haendel

Claro de luna. (Adagio de la Sonata XIV). ..... Beethoven

Tema variado ..... Mozart-Sors

Vals N.º 3 ..... Chopin-Mangoré

Nocturno N.º 2 ..... "

III

El Duelo de la Patria. .... Chavez-Mangoré

Invocación a la Luna. (Rito aborigen) ..... Mangoré

Contemplación ..... "

Punto Guanacasteco. (Introducción, tema y variaciones sobre el popular aire tico). "

Program from San José, Costa Rica, March 29, 1939.



minor, dedicated to Francisco Salazar. He also composed a series of variations on a popular Costa Rican dance called *El Punto Guanacasteco* and presented them in concert at the National Theatre on March 29, 1939:

- First Part:**
1. Two Studies (Coste)
    - a) No. 8-Scherzando
    - b) No. 22-Allegro Vivace
  2. La Catedral (Mangoré)
    - Andante Religioso
    - Allegro Solemne
  3. Danza Mora (Tárrega)
  4. Polo y Solea-from Suite Andalucia (Parga)

- Second Part:**
1. Minuet (Handel)
  2. Adagio-Claro de Luna (Beethoven)
  3. Mozart Variations (Sor)
  4. Vals No. 3 (Chopin-Mangoré)
  5. Nocturne No. 2 (Chopin-Mangoré)

- Third Part:**
1. El Duelo de la Patria (Chavez)
  2. Invocación a la Luna-Rito Aborigen (Mangoré)
  3. Contemplación (Mangoré)
  4. Punto Guanacasteco-Introduction,  
Theme and Variations on the popular  
Costa Rican air (Mangoré)

After six months of reduced concert activity, the program he presented was quite different from his "normal" concert presentation. The pieces by Spanish guitarist Juan Parga (1843-1899) are new. The *Vals No. 3* was probably a transcription of Op. 34, No. 2 (in a minor) by Chopin. The piece *El Duelo de la Patria* ("Grief of the Fatherland") is by Costa Rican composer Rafael Chavez Torres (1839-1907) and is a funeral march written in 1882 (which was used for the burial services of the Spanish King Alfonso XII in 1885). As can be observed, Barrios was still billing himself as Nitsuga Mangoré. Just before departing Costa Rica, he wrote the lyric piece *Dinora*, dedicated to Dinora Bolandi, daughter of Walter Bolandi, a fellow architect and good friend of Francisco Salazar who also studied guitar with Barrios.

After nearly a year in Costa Rica, Barrios arranged several concerts in El Salvador in July of 1939. They arrived in San Salvador on August 5 at which time Agustín sent a photograph of himself to his mother Martina in Paraguay with the inscription "Adored Mother: Receive, with this photo, the immense love of your son who carries you always in his heart<sup>3</sup>." A little over a month later Martina would suffer the pain of Francisco Martin's suicide.





A picnic in Costa Rica, 1939. Gloria is on the far right.



Departing by train from San José, July, 1939



# TEATRO NACIONAL

Teléfono 1-7-2 — Por y Para Beneficencia.

MARTES 25 DE JULIO DE 1939

PROGRAMA ESPECIAL DE DEBUT A LAS 9.15 P. M.

## PRIMER

## RECITAL DE GUITARRA

DEL GENIAL VIRTUOSO COMPOSITOR PARAGUAYO



» NITSUGA MANGORÉ «

Quinta de San Salvador, - D. A.

Program from San Salvador, July 25, 1939

## PROGRAMA

### I

- La Catedral a) Preludio.....  
b) Andante religioso.....  
c) Allegro.....  
Danza mora.....  
Polo y Soleá (aires andaluces).....
- } Mangoré  
Tárrega  
Parga

### II

- Minueto.....  
Claro de luna (Adagio de la sonata XIV).....  
Allemande et Courante.....  
Preludio No. 4.....  
Nocturno Op. 9, No. 2.....
- Haendel  
Beethoven  
Bach  
Chopin

### III

- Fandanguillo.....  
Andaluza (Danza No. 5).....  
Contemplación.....  
Invocación a la luna (De la suite aborigen).....
- Turina  
Granados  
Mangoré





A three concert series was offered on July 25, 26 and 27 in the National Theatre in San Salvador followed by three more concerts on August 13, 18 and 20th<sup>4</sup>. The first of these six performances featured the debut of *La Catedral* as a three movement work, including the *Preludio* written the previous year in Havana:

**First Part:** 1. *La Catedral* (Mangoré)  
                   *Preludio*  
                   *Andante Religioso*  
                   *Allegro Solemne*

2. *Danza Mora* (Tárrega)
3. *Polo y Soleá* (Parga)

**Second Part:** 1. *Minuet* (Handel)  
                   2. *Adagio* from Sonata XIV (Beethoven)  
                   3. *Allemande and Courante* (Bach)  
                   4. a) *Prelude No. 4* (Chopin)  
                       b) *Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 2* (Chopin)

**Third Part:** 1. *Fandanguillo* (Turina)  
                   2. *Danza No. 5* (Granados)  
                   3. *Contemplación* (Mangoré)  
                   4. *Invocación a la Luna* (Mangoré)

He remained in El Salvador until September at which time he headed north to Guatemala. He stayed in Guatemala for some time, creating two new pieces in November: *Variations on a Theme of Tárrega* (six variations on the piece *Lágrima*) and a *Preludio* in e minor (dated November 29, 1939). Trejos claims that Barrios reputedly suffered a minor heart attack at this time in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, but he ignored the warnings and went on to Mexico.

Some time after this he arrived in Mexico City. There he suffered a major heart attack. Trejos claims that this occurred during a concert while playing the Bach *Fugue* and that he collapsed on stage. Godoy claims that Barrios again attempted to procure visas for himself and Gloria to enter the United States and that he was denied, and the stress of this brought on the attack. Whatever the particulars, doctors advised him to go to a lower elevation and to rest. Barrios was quite debilitated and would never fully regain his vitality after this.

He left Mexico City and journeyed to Guatemala, staying only a short time before returning to El Salvador in 1940. The President of El Salvador, General Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez, was a great admirer of Barrios, calling him "one of the chosen ones" whose "artistic culture does great good for those who listen." After a concert attended by dignitaries (which in-



cluded the Paraguayan Ambassador), General Martinez appointed him Professor of Guitar at the National Conservatory, presenting him with a check for 5000 colones, declaring that he must stay in El Salvador.<sup>5</sup>

Gloria and Agustín settled down in San Salvador. The Salvadorean pianist/composer Maria Baratta, who became friends with them during their first visit in 1933, gave them use of a large house which Gloria eventually ran as a pension. It was in this pension that Juan de Dios Trejos lived during the years 1942-44. Gloria's cooking made it a popular place to stay. Francisco and Roberto Bracamonte, who studied guitar with Barrios, were also residents in this pension. Gloria continued to operate this pension until after Barrios' death, eventually leaving El Salvador with Pascual Cosarelli, a wealthy Italian coffee planter (another boarder at the pension) who moved back to Rome after the end of World War Two. Gloria evidently lived out her days in Italy as a "woman of leisure"<sup>6</sup>.

Barrios continued to concertize during these years in numerous towns in El Salvador. He also played occasionally on local Radio YSR. But most of his time was devoted to teaching, and a circle of pupils, all of whom became fervent admirers, soon developed: Cortés and René Andrino, Francisco and Roberto Bracamonte, Antonio Carballo, Benjamín Cisneros, José Cándido Morales, Luís M. Samayoa, Juan de Dios Trejos, Ruben Urquilla and Manuel Urrutia. Barrios proved to be an excellent teacher who "never approved a lesson done by a student if it wasn't played impeccably...he obligated the student to play the guitar with enthusiasm, with sweetness and with the necessary clarity. He sustained the opinion that the guitar must be played so that it can be heard, for which he recommended...not only the study of scales, but also barring, slurring, rest strokes, trills, glissandi, vibrato, mordents, etc. Frequently when a student played a lesson well he would improvise variations at the same time, producing beautiful melodies."

A program from this time (1943) of a concert that Barrios shared with three of his best guitar pupils reveals the success he was having in his teaching:

**First Part: Guitarist Luis M. Samayoa**

1. Madrigal Gavota (Barrios)
2. Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)

Guitarist Jesús Quiroa

3. Preludio (Barrios)
4. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)

Guitar duo: Manuel Urrutia and Jesus Quiroa

5. Three Studies (Aguado)
- Guitar Trio: Samayoa, Quiroa and Urrutia
6. Zapateado (Barrios)





This, as well as the photo on the following page, were taken at the Olmedo Conservatory of Music, in San Salvador, circa 1941. In his hands is the Morant guitar given to him by the Spanish Queen Eugenia Victoria and which is today in the Guzmán Museum in San Salvador.







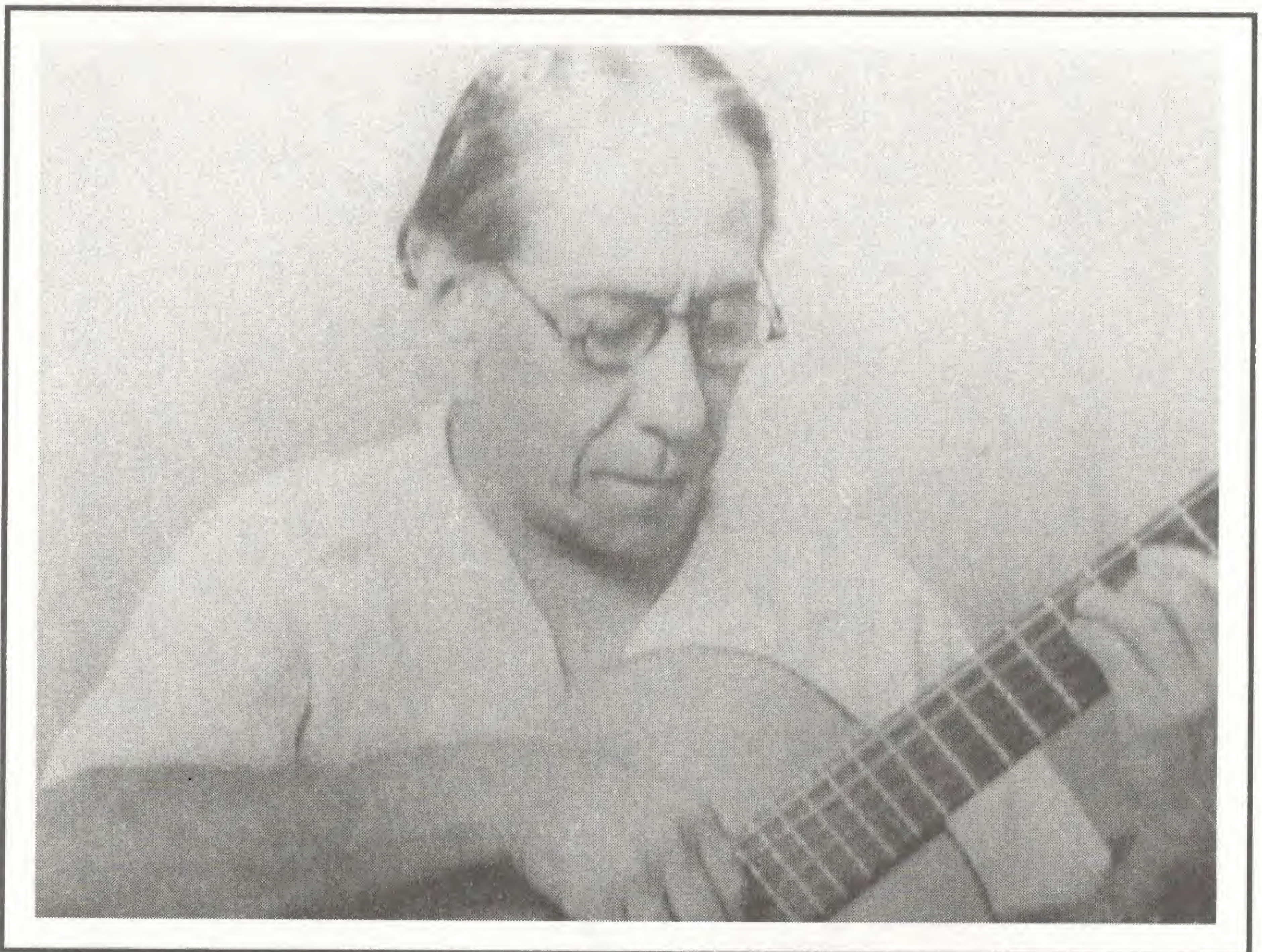
**Second Part: Luis M. Samayoa**

7. Two Preludes (Bach)
- Agustín Barrios Mangoré
8. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)
9. Minuet (Beethoven)
10. Canzonetta (Mendelssohn)
11. Nocturne (Chopin)

**Third Part: Agustín Barrios Mangoré**

12. Danza Castellana (Moreno Torroba)
13. Leyenda (Albéniz)
14. Moraima (Espinosa)
15. Gran Jota (Tárrega-Mangoré)

The piece *Estudio* (in A major, which erroneously has been called *Estudio de Concierto No. 2*) was written in October of 1940 and dedicated to his pupil Luis María Samayoa, a medical doctor who lived in the northern town of Santa Ana. The “duets” of Aguado studies included second guitar



The only photo in which he is seen wearing glasses, taken around 1943.



parts done by Barrios. During these last years Barrios would create many new pieces, some reflecting a didactic premise: *Estudio para Ambas Manos* (November 1940), *Estudio del Ligado* 1 and 2 and *Estudio en Arpeggio* (July 1941), *Escala y Preludio* and *Gavota al Estilo Antiguo* (August 1941), an arrangement of Coste's *Study No. 22* (July 1942), 2nd guitar to *Estudio en Si Menor* (September 1942), *Villancico de Navidad* (July 1943), *Danza Paraguaya* for 2 Guitars and *Zapateado Caribe* for 3 guitars (November 1943) and *Una Limosna por el Amor de Dios* (May 1944). He also composed numerous other pieces that were never written down, among which figured *El Surtidor*, *Cunita de Cristal*, *Aires Sureños* and a *Preludio*.

In 1943 Barrios recorded on a Crosley Home Recording Unit owned by Alfreso Massi his pieces *Diana Guaraní* and *Invocación a la Luna*. These recordings were then sent to Washington, D.C., and supposedly were played over the air on the radio on Pan-American Union Day in April 1943. The discs were then returned to El Salvador to Juan de Dios Trejos, who kept them for several years, ultimately giving the records in 1950 (as well as one of several albums Barrios kept that contained press clippings and memorabilia) to Gumersindo Ayala Aquino (1910-1972), a Paraguayan musician who headed a group touring Central America at that time called *Conjunto Guaireño*. Ayala was a great admirer of his fellow countryman and felt it almost a sacred duty to find any materials relating to Barrios. He requested that Barrios' remains be transferred to Paraguay, a petition that was denied and has continued to be denied ever since by the Salvadorean government.

In March of 1944 Segovia visited El Salvador, playing a concert in San Salvador on March 22. In Costa Rica Segovia stayed at the home of Francisco Salazar and thus knew that Barrios was in El Salvador. They spent several hours together chatting in Segovia's hotel room. No guitars were played. Barrios was in bad physical shape, and it would seem probable that Segovia felt a certain amount of pity for him, seeing his condition, stranded in a relatively isolated country, forgotten and poor. Fifteen years later, in Santiago de Compostela, Segovia would declare that "Barrios was a man who tried to destroy himself, but couldn't because he was such a genius."<sup>7</sup> Changing his name, changing his looks (Barrios had surgery done on his lips in Uruguay in the 1920's), changing his manner of presentation and dress — from a certain point of view, Barrios did indeed "destroy" himself and no doubt Segovia was referring to all these factors when he offered this opinion. The time they spent together was cordial and polite, and Segovia reputedly left Barrios a set of Pirastro gut strings as a gift (a subtle criticism of steel strings).

In these last years Barrios would practice his guitar in the mornings from 8 am to 12 noon. Friends and students would drop by and see him and



**SDL Mayor**

**MI Menor**

The first section contains two handwritten musical scales. The first is labeled 'SDL Mayor' and the second is labeled 'MI Menor'. Each scale is written on three staves, labeled I, II, and III. The notation includes notes, accidentals, and fingerings (numbers 1-4) for each hand. The scales are written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

**Sextas**

**Diatonica mayor**

**Menor melódica**

**Menor armónica**

**Cromática de 6<sup>ta</sup> mayores**

**Cromática de 6<sup>ta</sup> menores**

The second section is titled 'Sextas' and contains five handwritten musical scales. Each scale is written on a single staff. The notation includes notes, accidentals, and fingerings (numbers 1-4) for each hand. The scales are written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Two scale lessons written and fingered by Barrios for his pupil Roberto Bracamonte who kept a notebook in which Barrios wrote diverse lessons as well as 2nd guitar parts to the music of Bach, Aguado and Torroba.



often he would still be in his pajamas, practicing and composing. Trejos claims that "Many times in the morning I would hear Barrios playing *Choro da Saudade*." According to Trejos, Barrios did technical exercises up to a point, and then he would begin to compose a work. A scale, or chord, might motivate him and he would work out his music by memory, foregoing paper and pencil until the last (and in many instances, unfortunately, foregoing it altogether). Morales states that Barrios had a peculiar method of practicing: he had a small sack filled with 100 pebbles. He would commence to play a piece, and if he finished it with no errors, a pebble was taken from the bag after which the piece would be played again. If a mistake was made, he would put all the pebbles back into the bag and start over. He would thus continue until he had played the piece without error 100 times consecutively.

RCA Victor contacted Barrios in 1944 requesting that he come to the United States to record. Barrios decided to go but did not plan to take Gloria with him (perhaps to avoid once again any visa complications). Instead, he was going to have José Cándido Morales accompany him, taking a route that would avoid the high altitude of Mexico City. They were to leave in



Agustín and Gloria visiting the El Salvadorean pianist María Baratta, to Barrios' left. This photo was taken very near the end of his life.

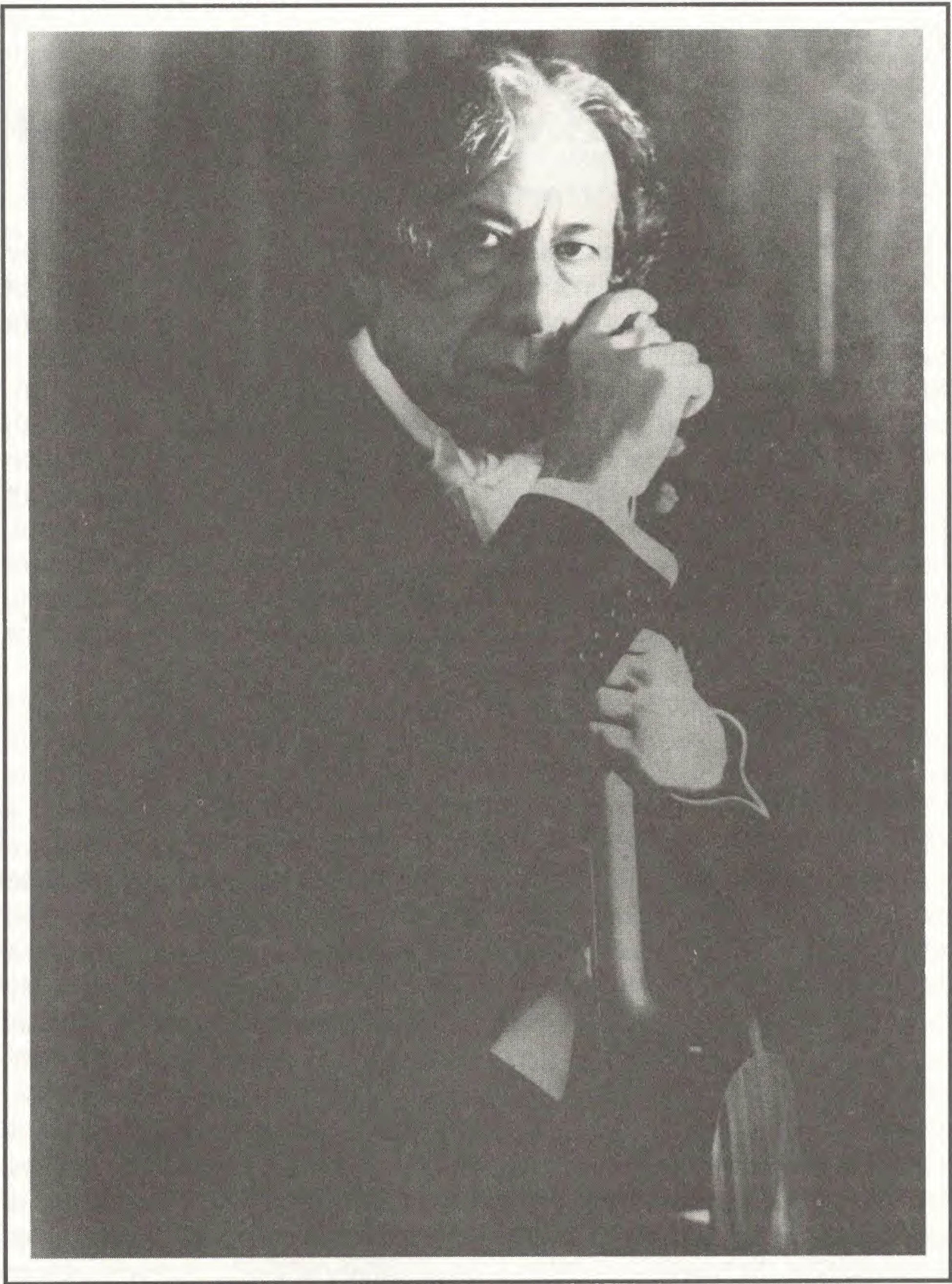


November. Finally it seemed within his grasp to go to the United States, a wish he had harbored for decades — and time ran out. Even if he had lived longer and had made the trip, his debilitated state of health would have greatly complicated this undertaking.

Trejos claims that Barrios' last days were filled with "tranquility, solace, and meditation" which were a "preparation for death". He knew that he was coming to the end. His heart had swollen and his chest was distended.<sup>8</sup> He reputedly called for a priest, and declared "I do not fear the past, but I do not know if I can overcome the mystery of the night." "Surrounded by his students and his wife Gloria, one of the greatest artists that America has ever had dies. The priest who attended him proclaimed, 'This is the first time I have witnessed the death of a Saint.'"

Death Certificate No. 06393003 of the municipality of San Salvador states that Barrios died "of cardiac insufficiency at ten o'clock today, in house number twenty-three of the first North Avenue of this city...". It is dated August 7, 1944. The following day at 9 in the morning he was buried in the Pantheon of Distinguished Men in the main cemetery where today a major headstone marks the site. Upon seeing the funeral procession pass by, the people in the main market stopped their activities in silent homage to Mangoré, who was "well loved by the people".







## CHAPTER 6:

# BARRIOS THE ARTIST

To understand Barrios one must keep in mind that he was a romantic by inclination. He grew up in a land rich in mythology, and the decades of his early youth in Paraguay exposed him primarily to 19th century music (a predilection of the publics of that time). He did not have the benefit of a formal and systematic education in music and consequently he was unaware of musical trends evolving in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century (the music of Debussy or Stravinsky). His sources of information (primarily from Hugo Riemann's text written in 1882) were inclusive to about the time of Brahms. Consequently his "musical pallet" resulted as tonal, harmonic and firmly grounded on the classical foundation of tonic-dominant architecture. His priorities and interests were in producing "beautiful, tonal, harmonic music" — he had no desire to incorporate extreme dissonance or to radically expand his harmony beyond traditional "consonance".

Barrios was concerned with expressing *emotions* in a full range of colors, embracing the negative (sadness and nostalgia as in the *Preludio* in b minor or *Choro da Saudade*) to the positive (ebullient, upbeat as in *Jha Che Valle*, *Sarita* or *Estudio de Concierto*). He was descriptive (as in *La Catedral* or *Las Abejas*), he was folkloric (as in *Cueca*, *Danza Paraguaya* and *Estilo Uruguayo*) and he was urban-popular (as in the tango *Don Perez Freire* or the waltz *Junto a tu Corazón*). Some of his music was directed toward purely technical ends: *Arabescos*, *Estudio del Ligado*, *Estudio para Ambas Manos*. Though he left no formal "school", his technique pervades everything he created. All areas of guitar technique are encountered in his works: tremolo, arpeggios, melodic bass, scales, slurs, campanella, glissando, tambora, harmonics, etc. Studies, preludes, theme and variations, rondo, barcarola, mazurka, minuet, medley — these were the classical forms he utilized. And of course his masterful adaptations of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Grieg, as well as numerous arrangements from opera, must be given their due as models of the art of transcription. In Barrios one finds a great variety of kinds of compositions and it is amazing how his works avoid any over-done harmonic characteristics. The sheer variety in Barrios' music is testimony to his genius.



He came to view creativity as a kind of religious activity, all in the service of Art. His life was a consecration to this idea – a wandering pilgrimage bringing to the masses his uplifting musical message. It was viewed as a noble thing to do and signified more than mere monetary reward – it was his purpose. This role that he chose as “the crusading Artist” was something he fell into naturally and spontaneously, reflecting the contentment, joy and respect he felt for his art. In his mind he saw it as “what he should be doing” simply because he could do it and do it well – whatever the financial success achieved. This philosophy he aptly described in his sonnet *Bohemio*, which he wrote in 1922:

### Bohemio

How impetuous is my turning! I am afloat,  
Moving with the impulse of destiny  
Dancing in a mad vortex  
Toward the four winds of the planet!

I carry in my blood a restless life  
And in my wandering, uncertain, a pilgrimage,  
Art goes lighting my way  
As if it were a fantastic comet!

I am a brother to those medieval troubadours  
Who suffered a romantic madness.  
Like them, also,  
When I am dead,  
God knows in what far-off port  
I will go to find my unmarked grave!

On the one hand Barrios lamented the fact that he could not return home to settle down permanently in his native Paraguay (nor in any country for that matter). But he obviously enjoyed travelling to new places, meeting new people, and playing his music for them. Had he felt otherwise he would not have spent most of his life travelling in nineteen Iberoamerican nations. He realized that for him there would be no other remedy than to keep moving, prophetically describing his end in the “far-off” country of El Salvador.

He had a strong feeling of self-worth and was very confident in the value of his creations. He knew he was functioning on the highest levels of the guitaristic art. But he had little inclination for “doing business” with his art. It is curious that this aspect of his profession was valued so slightly by him. Had he been more attentive to writing down and publishing his music, he no doubt would not have died forgotten and penniless. He should have gone to Europe during the 1920’s instead of spending his time playing in the



cities and towns of South America. In spite of this lack of systematic publication and promotion, his music has survived sheerly because of its obvious excellence and today it is a priceless legacy for the classic guitar.

As time passes and "anti-romantic" sentiment in the music world dissipates, the true value of his art becomes more apparent to generations of guitarists the world over. No claim is being made as to the value of his music in an absolute sense, but rather what it means to the specific area of concert guitar repertoire. As Cuban guitarist/composer Leo Brouwer (b. 1939) has stated:

Barrios is a new revelation in the field of basic guitar repertoire. He fulfills the gap that was never quite completed by the Romantics. Some may argue that because he was writing romantic music in a contemporary period, he was "old fashioned". Perhaps, but then so were Sibelius and Rachmaninoff (and in piano literature, there were dozens of composers who remained stylistically tied to the 19th century whose music is esteemed no less for the fact).

Barrios' mind and the structure of his thought were romantic. Just as Bach continued to write superb baroque music up to the year of his death (1750), well after the high baroque period had come to an end, Barrios was writing exquisite romantic music long after its passing in Europe.

In Barrios there occurs a certain kind of innovation in the 19th century harmonic language which can only be done from a point later in time, "out of the period". Tárrega (genial father of the guitar) never, even in his best preludes, transcended romantic clichés. Barrios, yes! Examples: *Estudio de Concierto*, *Prelude to La Catedral*, *Mazurka Apassionata*, etc. No prelude of Tárrega reaches the *Prelude in G Minor* or the short *Prelude in C Minor* by Mangoré. Llobet has other sources of information. He is indirectly influenced by Ricardo Viñes, the pianist, and then he is "avantgarde". Llobet has his moments as in *El Mestre* but never in his original works, only in his harmonizations.

The original works of Llobet do not have the same cut as those of Tárrega. Pujol is perhaps the most advanced in language but his production is inconsistent because an advanced language (and not so advanced at that) does not imply that the formal structure will be well rounded. Barrios, even in his most trifling, insignificant works, knows form. The polkas of



Tárrega and his *Jota Aragonesa*, and even including his tremolo studies, do not reach the level attained by Barrios in his *Una Limosna* study.

Barrios' rightful place as one of the greatest virtuoso guitarist/composers is now assured. Beginning in 1977, with the release of the CBS recording by Australian virtuoso John Williams (b. 1941), this recognition on an international scale has continued and today his works are presented by guitarists the world over. Williams, one of today's premiere virtuoso concert guitarists, (considered the most "successful" of several generations who have studied with Andrés Segovia), has thus "set right" the lack of recognition that beset Barrios not only during his own lifetime but for decades following his death. In Williams' own words:

Barrios has been, obviously, the one seriously underrated composer for the modern guitar. He was overshadowed by Segovia and it is a pity that Segovia ignored him as a musician: Segovia was from such a completely different world and he had his own reasons for patronizing Barrios — and perhaps if he hadn't felt as he did he would not have done what he did. Nevertheless, Barrios is increasingly appreciated today as the outstanding guitarist/composer of his time — I would say of any time — for the qualities of inventiveness and ability to make the guitar "speak," musically.

His music is very guitaristic, rather like Chopin is for the piano. In this way he has filled that need of every instrument to have its composer who "belonged" to the instrument and at the same time wrote great music. I don't think Villa-Lobos ever quite filled that gap — he almost did, but in a limited way: the dozen good pieces are very effective, but they don't have the variety of musical qualities that Barrios has in his music and neither do they have the variety or spontaneity technically in terms of sound, and I don't just mean how difficult they are.

And that, of course, comes very much from the whole Latin American approach to the guitar, which is very harmonic and also very melodic — it's a natural and beautiful combination of both and I think Barrios typifies this when you hear on his records and also see in the music that it has to be fingered in a certain way for the sound: a very typical example of this Latin American "style", whether it's folk playing or the music of Barrios, is to take a tune and "hang" the harmony around it. You don't have so much formal position playing, which is more the European tradition — you might have a tune on the



third string, a favorite of Barrios, and use open strings or any notes above or below to fill out the harmony. You tend to play up and down the fingerboard like a string player, and it's more expressive than the "block harmony" of the "keyboard" style of writing. I think that's the main reason I really enjoy playing Barrios, in addition to thinking it great music.

Paraguayan composer/guitarist Sila Godoy (b. 1923) has been researching Barrios since the 1940's and he has spent many years travelling throughout Iberoamerica collecting the music and memorabilia of Barrios. The entire guitar world owes Godoy a sincere thank you for the selfless effort and sacrifice he has put forth in collecting and preserving the legacy of his fellow countryman. Shortly after Barrios' death in 1944, Godoy wrote this tribute to the memory of Barrios:

#### The Death of the Poet of the Guitar: Agustín Barrios

The life of Barrios was a ceaseless activity oriented toward the search and the realization of Art. He made music a supreme ideal of beauty and he consecrated it with all the love and sincerity of his extraordinary temperament. His life, initiated under the sign of predestination for genius, was a parable of a dream of the guitar, which was only quieted by death far away. But death itself, taking the perishable man, only causes the artist to begin really living the inalterable life of his own creation. Barrios, perpetually the wanderer, enamored of the guitar under all the skies of America, has not been extinguished with his physical death but rather has begun to live in reality the unalterable and serene life of the archetype. Sleeping sweetly over his guitar, he was finally able to find, far away, the ineffable road of return. Becoming part of his people, whom he never forgot nor ceased to love with his illuminated artist's heart, he is now more than ever a part of all America, this continent full of young spiritual force that proclaims him with the vibrant voice of admiration: its foremost guitar.

Barrios was a romantic hero of the guitar. But he was also a romantic of America. And this marvelous equilibrium between his love of the instrument and his devotion to the theme of America is what elevates his art to unexpected altitudes. Because Barrios, had he reduced his vocation to a purely technical affair, would have been, yes, the great instrumentalist, the admirable interpreter that he was; but he would not have reached, perhaps, that density and intensity that is con-



tained in his musical creations if he had not obeyed that imperious voice from the depths of his spirit which commanded him to travel the Americas capturing that which is American with an exceptional intuitive capacity characteristic of all of his work. For Barrios was not simply a talented interpreter of classical music. The most vital and interesting part of his artistic personality centers on the fact that he knew how to feel and express, without resorting to any easy solutions or attitudes, the intimate peculiarity of American music. In his instrument there resounded unmistakably the living expression of that which the guitar carries with it from its remote origin to the most recent influx of Spanish blood. But also in the hands of Barrios there vibrated always a new experience, untranslatable and profound. Here is the extraordinary importance of the guitaristic work of Barrios, in which there is no declivity nor decline in its coherent evolution. The harmonious apex of the guitar of Barrios weds the soul of ancient and modern Spain and the soul of America; that is to say, instead of diminishing its expressive value, the guitar is enriched with an enormous spiritual and aesthetic contribution.

His facility in capturing folklore was amazing. Passing through the distinct countries of the continent, he stopped and listened for a while, understanding immediately the soul of the region, and soon after would be heard his own artistic and emotional voice. There are countries in America in which the compositions of Barrios on folkloric motifs have not been surpassed by native musicians of those nations.

Thus, in one of his last concerts, there figured in the program *Aire de Quena* and *Zapateado Caribe*, compositions in which Agustín bequeathed to us two pages representative of Indo-American guitar music. In them the savage beauty of indian art, a reminiscence of life that Barrios revealed in formal, purely classical structures, loses nothing: not the harsh flavor of the land, nor the intimacy of the new American man. His aesthetic preoccupations and his vast classical music culture rather than taking him away from the living fountains of inspiration of his place and time, inspired him to dispose himself of them and they aided him in capturing that which is permanent and true in those currents, multiplying the possibilities of expression of his surprisingly strong creative talent.

The diverse terrain of American folklore kept no secrets from him. His artistic peregrination through the Americas, which



was never carried out according to predetermined plans, indicates, nevertheless, a hidden reason and not an arbitrary whimsicality in the orientation of his wanderings. Barrios was there where his awakened sensibility could extract the purest material, the moment of highest poetic tension, for his creative work. And this is perhaps the source of the artistic fertility and the intrinsic quality of his work.

But in spite of all his travels, the memory of his people was always stamped on the most sensitive part of his heart. Barrios never desired nor was he able to forget his homeland. And this nostalgia was, perhaps, one of the most painful companions of his life.

Proof that he lived and felt his culture, even when far away, is that in the compositions of his last years there was growing even more a feeling of innate "paraguayanness", without detracting from his natural and magnificent predisposition towards a universal feeling in art. In *Jha Che Valle*, for example, one of his brilliant works, the theme is full of typical local color. In this short composition there vibrates the almost religious feeling of joy that a man feels upon contacting and identifying himself with that which is his, that joy which a mysterious magnetism attracts to the depths of the heart and which Barrios undoubtedly felt when, thanks to his art, he was able to experience intimately even though a great distance from his people. The mere title of this piece is a sigh of nostalgia (*Jha Che Valle* in Guaraní means "Oh My Homeland!").

But Barrios is more a part of the world than of his homeland. The destiny of all great artists who belong to the universal, is expressed in the words of Guyau: "Art is the expression of a reasonable and responsible life that evokes the highest consciousness, the highest feelings and the noblest thoughts; it transports man from his particular life to the universal life by means of a participation in those same sentiments and ideas."

This was Barrios, an illumined soul, an exceptional artist, the greatest poet that up until now the guitar has had in America.



Barrios was indeed a poet, not only of the guitar, but also in the literary sense of the word. His appreciation of rhythm and form in language paralleled his musical awareness. He was an avid reader and felt a high regard for the great works of literature. To write poetry was part of his romantic view of existence. Poetry and music were closely related for Barrios, and the fact that he performed many years in concert with his younger brother, the poet Francisco Martín Barrios, illustrates his conviction that these art forms complimented one another.

Eight different poems are known by Barrios. The earliest of these is the already cited sonnet *Bohemio* (14 lines grouped 4-4-3-3), with an ingenious inner rhyme scheme that can only really be appreciated in Spanish:

### Bohemio

Cuán raudo es mi girar, yo soy veleta  
que moviendose al impulso del destino  
va danzando su loco torbellino  
hacia los cuatro vientos del planeta.

Llevo en mi plasma de una vida inquieta  
y en mi vagar, incierto, peregrino,  
el arte va alumbrando mi camino  
cual si fuese un fantástico cometa.

Yo soy hermano en glorias y dolores  
de aquellos medioeveles trovadores  
que sufrieron romántica locura.

Como ellos tambien cuando haya muerto  
Dios solo sabe en que lejano puerto  
iré a encontrar mi tosca sepultura.

The rhyme scheme for the first two quatrains is:

A.....veleta  
B.....destino  
B.....torbellino  
A.....planeta  
A.....inquieta  
B.....peregrino  
B.....camino  
A.....cometa

For the last six lines, the rhyme scheme is:

C.....dolores  
C.....trovadores  
D.....locura  
E.....muerto  
E.....puerto  
D.....sepultura



Barrios employed a slight variation in this sonnet entitled *Mi Guitarra*, in which he expresses his view that the highest purpose of the guitar is to express emotion and feeling:

### Mi Guitarra

Hay un hondo misterio en tu sonoro	A
Jardiniere corazón, guitarra mía.	B
Gozas penando, y hay en tu alegría	B
Transportes de pasión, gotas de lloro.	A
Te dió su corazón el dulce moro	A
El íbero te dió su alma bravía	B
Y la América Virgen, se diría,	B
Puso en tí, de su amor, todo el tesoro.	A
Por eso en tu cordaje soberano	C
Que vibra con acento casi humano	C
Es a veces, tu voz, como un lamento	D
Como queja de tu alma solitaria	E
En cuya triste y mística plegaria	E
Florece sin cesar el sentimiento.	D

### My Guitar

There is a deep mystery in your sonorous  
 Garden heart, guitar of mine.  
 You enjoy suffering, and in your joy  
 Ecstasies of passion, teardrops of crying.

The sweet Moor gave you your heart,  
 The Iberian gave you your untamed soul  
 And Virgin America, you might say,  
 Put in you, because of its love, all the treasure.

And so on your supreme strings  
 That vibrate with an almost human accent  
 There is, at times, your voice, like a lament

As a sigh from your lonely heart  
 In whose sad and mystical plea  
 Sentiment forever flourishes.

An untitled sonnet utilizing yet another variation was published in the Asunción newspaper *Patria* on September 25, 1922. It deals with Barrios' feelings upon returning to his homeland:

Hay un país en el Nuevo Continente,	A
donde tiene la raza femenina	B
destellos de una luz casi divina	B
en sus ojos de brillo sorprendente.	A



Cada varón pelea bravamente,  
 cada mujer parece heroína,  
 y cualquiera matrona que declina  
 lleva escrito el valor sobre la frente.

A  
 B  
 B  
 A

Hay una dama de salientes dones,  
 Que por temor a la invasora garra,  
 dió a sus hijos fuerza de leones;

C  
 D  
 C

Y encuentra entre tan bravos ejemplares  
 Al Mago Encantador de la Guitarra,  
 Que hace honor a su patria y a sus lares.

E  
 D  
 E

There is a country in the New Continent,  
 where the feminine race has  
 the sparks of an almost divine light  
 in their brilliant eyes full of surprise.

Each male fights bravely,  
 each woman seems a heroine,  
 and whichever matron who declines  
 carries her value written on her forehead.

There is a woman of salient talents,  
 who for fear of the invading claw,  
 gave her sons the strength of lions;

And among such valiant examples is found  
 the Enchanting Magician of the Guitar  
 who does honor to his fatherland and its homes.

A different type of scheme can be seen in this short, untitled six line poem in which every phrase uses the suffix “-aga” for its rhyme:

Toda ilusión el corazón embriaga  
 Mientras su dulce realidad nos niega:  
 Es realidad después, y ya no halaga;  
 El deseo es una ola: se despliega,  
 Resbala, se hincha, se abalanza, llega  
 Reventando en espumas...y se apaga!

All illusion intoxicates the heart  
 While it denies us its sweet reality:  
 Reality is afterwards, and now does not flatter;  
 Desire is a wave: it spreads out,  
 It glides, it swells, it balances, and arrives  
 Splashing and foaming...and then it disappears!

A more intricate rhyme pattern can be found in the poem *El Arte Musical* which was dedicated to Miss Susana Elizeche Benítez, and is signed “Agustín Barrios (Cacique Mangoré)”, which suggests that the work was



written some time after 1930. In this poem Barrios describes to Susanita, who was evidently a vocalist, what a special destiny it was to become a musician and practice "The Musical Art":

### El Arte Musical

Es el arte musical	A
un sagrado manantial,	A
Susanita,	B
oculto entre verdes palmas	C
que brinda un agua a los almas	C
tan fresquita,	B
tan clara, tan cristalina,	D
cual la mente no imagina	D
otra igual.	E
Oasis que el cielo quiso	F
fuere nuestro paraíso	F
terrenal.	E
Oasis reconfortante	E
donde descansa un instante	E
la perdida	F
Caravana, en su incierto	G
viaje, por el desierto	G
de la vida.	F
Ah! Cúantos siente el ansia	
de morar en esa estancia	
de verdor,	
en su anhelo de solaz	
en su eterna sed de paz	
y de amor.	
Mas, no a todos les fué dado	
ser guardianes del sagrado	
manantial.	
A ese alto misterio	
donde se oficia el misterio	
musical,	
sólo van aquellos seres	
que con mágicos poderes	
de excepción,	
dominan el circuito	
donde vibra un infinito	
de emoción.	



Y tú, bella Susanita  
Señora de bendita  
chispa ardiente,  
a tu empeño, ya sumisa  
serás gran sacerdotisa  
de esa fuente.  
Y sus ninfas, a porfía,  
te darán la melodía  
de su voz,  
voz divina, a cuyos sonos,  
se elevan los corazones  
hasta Dios.

## The Musical Art

The musical art is a sacred spring, Little Susan  
hidden among green palms, offering water to our souls so fresh,  
so clear, so crystalline, that the mind could not imagine its equal.  
An oasis that heaven wanted to be our earthly paradise.  
A comforting oasis where there rests for an instant the lost caravan  
on its uncertain trip through the desert of life.  
Oh! How many have felt the urge to dwell in those green fields  
in their desire for comfort, in their eternal thirst for peace and love.  
However, not everyone is given to be guardians of the sacred spring.  
To that high mystery, where the mystery of music officiates,  
only go those beings who with magical and exceptional powers,  
Master the circuit where there vibrates an infinity of emotion.  
And you, beautiful little Susan, Señora of the blessed shining spark,  
By your earnest desire, now humble, you will be a great priestess of that  
fountain.

And its nymphs, insistently, will give you the melody of your voice  
A divine voice, whose sounds elevate our hearts to God.



Barrios was known for his improvisational abilities. These were not limited solely to music and the guitar, however. This last poem, untitled, was written spontaneously on February 28, 1925 in Asunción for a young lady named Isabel (not the same Isabel that Barrios sketched in 1908 as seen on page 30) with whom he had become romantically involved. The poem was written by Agustín as a reply by Isabel to her cousin Nila, from whom Isabel had just received a letter. It is 21 quatrains that feature a rhyme scheme of A-B-A-B in the first quatrain followed by A-B-B-A in the second and is quite clever, all the more so when one realizes that Barrios wrote this at one quick sitting as a single and complete improvisation:

Mi Nila muy queredita:  
lo más oportunadamente  
fué en mis manos tu cartita  
fecha del 15 del corriente.

My very loved Nila:  
most opportunely  
your little letter was in my hands  
dated the 15th of the month.

Cuyas lineas las leí  
con la mayor alegría  
pues, en verdad, ya sentía  
ganas de saber de tí.

The lines of which I read  
with the greatest joy  
since, in truth, I felt  
I wanted to know of you.

Y hoy se que tú has llegado  
sin ninguna novedad  
mi espíritu se ha llenado  
de una gran felicidad.

And today I know that you have arrived  
without any novelty  
my spirit has been filled  
with a great happiness.

Por muchas ocupaciones  
va mi carta con demora  
y me apresuro yo ahora  
a pedirte mil perdones.

Due to my being so busy  
this letter is late  
and I hasten now  
To beg a thousand pardons.

Si no contesté a tu amable  
más antes, yo debo al fin,  
confesarte que Agustín  
es el único culpable.

If I did not answer your kindness  
earlier, I must, in the end,  
confess that Agustín  
is the only guilty one.

Para un alma que se ofrenda  
Con el anhelo profundo  
De encontrar otra en el mundo  
Que la ame y la comprenda...

For a soul that presents offerings  
With the profound desire  
To find another in the world  
That loves her and understands her...



Me dices que con Manolo  
Fué tu viaje de ilusiones...  
¡Claro! en esas condiciones  
Yo iría hasta el mismo Polo.

You tell me that with Manolo  
Your journey was one of illusions...  
Clearly! in these conditions  
I would go to the same Pole.

Pero le hiciste la pera  
Porque de Paraguarí  
Te pasaste a Ybycuí  
Sin prevenirle siquiera.

But you made him the pear  
Because from Paraguarí  
You went to Ybycuí  
Without even warning him.

Y su mal humor es tanto  
Por la broma que le hiciste  
Que anda, desde que te fuiste  
Mas triste que Viernes Santo.

And his bad humor is so great  
For the joke that you played on him  
That he walks, since you left  
Sadder than Holy Friday.

Este Carnaval el pobre  
Lo ha pasado encerradito  
¡No se ha salido un momentito!  
(Aunque el deseo le sobre).

This Carnaval the poor man  
Has passed shut up indoors  
He has not left for even a moment!  
(Even though he has ample desire).

No dice esta boca es mía  
Siempre está meditabundo  
Como si ya en este mundo  
Para el no hubiese alegría

He doesn't say that this mouth is mine  
He's always pensive  
As if now in this world  
For him there is no joy.

Pero si de ti, tu chico  
Te acuerda, grato! sublime!  
No hay persona que se anime  
A hacerle cerrar el pico...

But if of you, your boy  
remembers, pleasing! sublime!  
There is no person who attempts  
To make him close his beak...

Así que mi buena Nila  
Con las nuevas que te doy  
Debes estar desde hoy  
Lo más contenta y tranquila.

And so my good Nila  
With the news that I give you today  
You must be from today forward  
Very content and tranquil.

Y a pesar de los atroces  
Calores te recordamos  
Y aunque sudando, bailamos  
Las piezas que tu conoces.

And in spite of the atrocious heat  
We remember you  
And though perspiring, we dance  
The pieces that you know.



Vieras a mí y Agustín  
Calentándonos las patas  
Al compás de cien "Piratas"  
Y "Martirios" sin fin!

Bueno, Nila, estoy pensando  
Que mi carta ya es muy larga  
Y va a aburrirte esta carga  
De locuras que te mando.

Recuerdos mil de mamita  
De Catalina, Ezequiel  
Y también van a Manuel  
De Carmen y de Leónita.

Y de parte de Manolo  
Van dos burros muy cargados  
De abrazos muy apretados  
Que te los envía él solo.

Y como remate, al fin,  
Te dejo, mi corazón,  
Que estos disparates son  
Travesuras de Agustín.

Que dulce como la miel  
Sea tu estadía en esa  
Y con cariño te besa  
Tu cuñadita, Isabel.

Nota: Por encargo pongo  
Esto, que Arnaldo te pide  
Que si tardas, él decide  
No ser más Cónsul del Congo.

You should see me and Agustín  
Heating up our feet  
To the beat of one hundred "Pirates"  
And "Martyrs" without end!

Good, Nila, I am thinking  
that my letter is very long  
And this weight is going to bore you  
From crazy thoughts that I send you.

A thousand remembrances to mom  
To Catalina, Ezequiel  
And also to Manuel  
From Carmen and from Leónita.

And on behalf of Manolo  
Two burrows very weighted down  
From very tight hugs  
That only he sends you.

And in conclusion, at the end,  
I entrust to you, my heart,  
That this nonsense is  
The mischief of Agustín.

May your stay there  
Be as sweet as honey  
And with tenderness I kiss you  
Your little sister-in-law, Isabel.

Note: By request I offer  
This, that Arnaldo asks you  
That if you are late, he will decide  
Not to be any more the Congo Consul.







## CHAPTER 7:

# BARRIOS THE MAN

Many of those who knew Barrios have shared over the years numerous stories and anecdotes regarding his life. All concur that he was a warm, unselfish and spontaneous person. He was at times moody, particularly after a concert performance. Boettner states that “he was a bit eccentric. Days of excellent humor alternated with periods of depression in which he needed moral support. And thus he would pass a whole week without touching his guitar and others he studied 10 to 12 hours straight, without even feeling the need to eat.” This was Barrios in 1935. I am of the opinion that by this time, after his years of struggle in South America, he was beginning to become a bit pessimistic regarding his career. Declining health also became a factor. Barrios was a very robust and physically active man who did gymnastics nearly every day (he particularly liked the high bar). But the decline of his physical strength evoked a debilitating psychological response in him and his self-confidence, which had always been taken for granted, was now becoming a bit undone. In his last years it has been claimed that his technical abilities, particularly in the left hand, began to diminish.

But during most of his life the overwhelming impression is that he maintained a positive and optimistic attitude. And always a recurring unselfishness that enabled him to leave with the people whom he loved (and who loved him) his artistic creations—be they music manuscripts, poems or drawings. Indeed, when looking at the number of compositions that have survived (about 100), and remembering that in his own lifetime he only formally published about 10 works, the fact that he did generously write down his music for many different friends in many different places is the main reason the body of his music survives at all (made possible by the love and respect of those who valued his “gifts” and preserved them, thereby rescuing his musical legacy from oblivion).

Barrios viewed creativity as a kind of “commodity” that could be given, either in gratitude (as “payment” for staying with someone for a period of time) or in exchange for something. Illustrative of this is this account that appeared in a publicity brochure Barrios himself produced in Uruguay circa 1925:



Barrios found himself in Sao Paulo passing a period of rest after the season of the grip, in the house of Señor Jorge Botelho, the Chief of Accounting in the Ministry of Culture. It was about 6 in the early evening, when, as always, surrounded by some friends, Barrios was playing the guitar in the dining room when the woman who did the laundry entered the house: a Portuguese señora, of advanced age. Barrios, with his habitual good humor, said to her: "Señora, I would like to propose a deal. Listen: you wash my clothes and I will pay you with music; you charge me by pieces and I will pay you with pieces."

The señora, seeing the joke, answered: "It's not a bad deal, but first let's see; play something from my country." And Barrios, wanting to convince her, chose something very Portuguese, an emotional *fado*, and he began to infuse in it all his feeling, to see if the deal could come about...

The good lady, seated and inclined over the table, resting her head in her hands, listened to him watching him and was happy at first, later silent. When Barrios finished, he enthusiastically burst out: "What do you think, Señora!" — and she was mute, immobile; she had fainted. Who knows what deep sadness or eternal nostalgia the notes of his guitar had evoked in her.

Afterwards...neither he, nor she, wanted to pursue the arrangement.

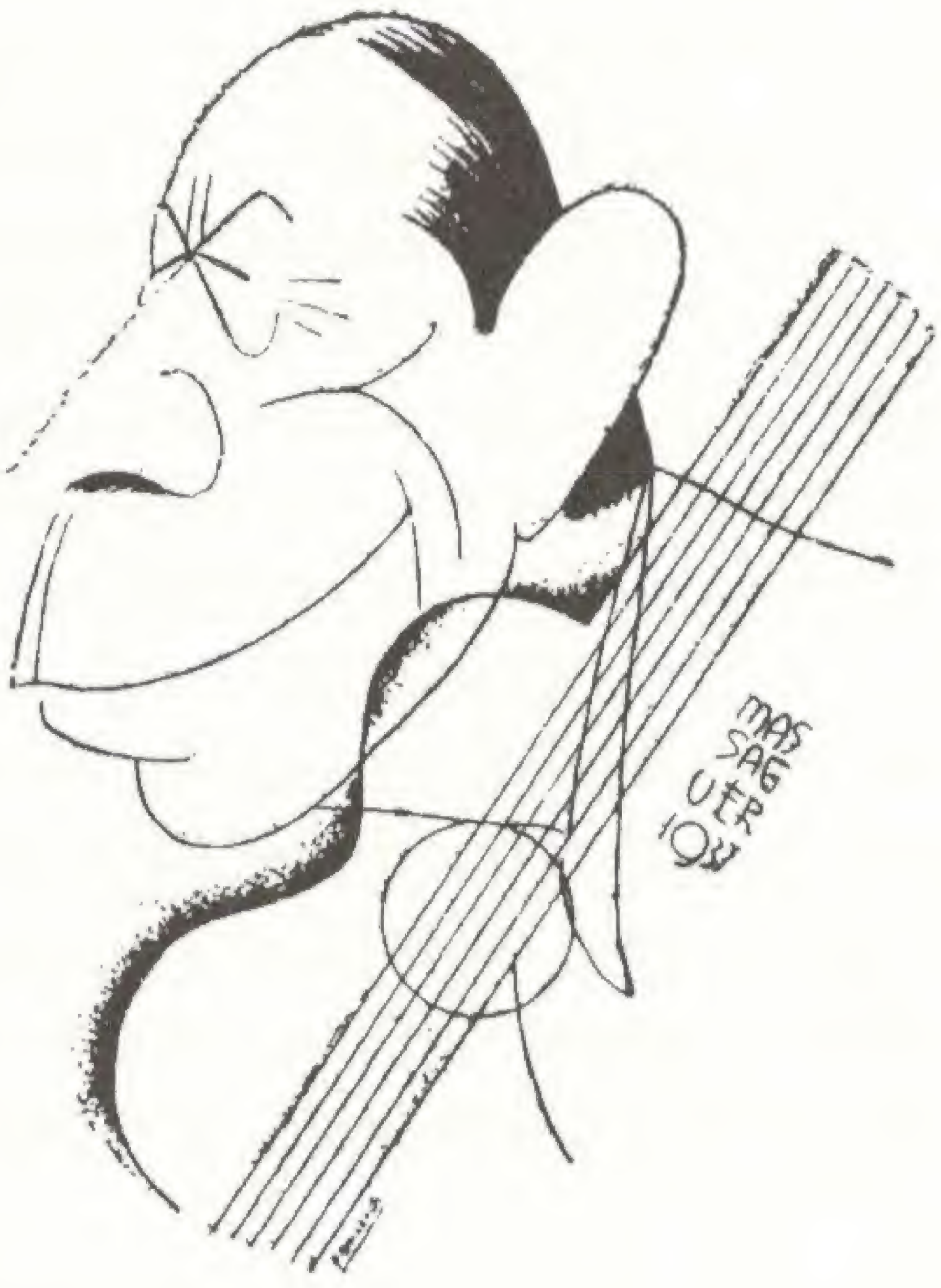
His generosity extended to giving money to people in need. In the Uruguayan town of Tacuarembó there was a small circus that was not doing well. The owners of the circus became friends with Barrios and visited him often. Finally they asked if he would perform under their tent to increase attendance, which he declined to do as the following day he had a concert scheduled in a theatre. However, after his recital he called the owners of the circus to him and gave them all the money he had earned from the concert. On another occasion Barrios helped a theatrical group that was stranded at a train station and had no money to retrieve their luggage. And yet another example: a certain Uruguayan writer had arrived from Paris, and his friends had thrown him a banquet which Barrios attended. He excused himself a bit early. At the end of the evening when the check was called for great was everyone's surprise when they were informed that the entire cost of the event had already been paid by Agustín Barrios!

This last occurrence must have taken place during one of the periods when he was "in the money". One receives the impression that Barrios had periods of relative financial well-being (as after a series of successful











concerts), but that most of his years were spent just one step ahead of poverty. As I have previously indicated, this was due in part to the fact that Barrios never left South America to spend extended periods in Europe or the United States, "wasting his time" playing for years in towns like Tacuarembó. There was no real money to be made in Latin America except in a few large cities playing at the highest levels. The fact that Barrios attempted to earn his livelihood primarily from performing (and not from teaching and publishing) places him in a unique posture: he was really the only virtuoso guitarist from South America who derived his livelihood solely from concertizing in numerous countries. Most professionals, such as Julio Sagreras, Rodríguez Arenas, Antonio Sinópoli, Pablo Escobar (to name just a few who based themselves in Buenos Aires) did not attempt to tour extensively and appeared in concert little outside of their own localities. Barrios played hundreds of concerts in 19 Iberoamerican countries – a feat unequalled by any other prominent Latin American guitarist contemporary to him.

That he could continue, even in the face of such sparse opportunity, is testimony to the kind of person he was. He had no second profession to fall back on—he had only really trained himself to be a guitarist and composer. He would have liked to have settled down in Asunción directing a government-sponsored Academy of the Guitar, but it was not to be. The material demands of life kept him moving, continually seeking new audiences for his artistic crusade. Had he followed his father's wishes, and become a medical doctor, he no doubt would have been a good one, and would have helped a great many of his fellow countryman, and probably would have had a happy life based in Paraguay. And the classic guitar would be without numerous bona fide masterpieces.

Some times Barrios' generosity extended to exercising his influence in a certain situation. In Venezuela, a woman came to Barrios beside herself with grief, declaring that her husband had been taken a political prisoner and was to be executed. She begged Barrios to go to the President to see what he could do. The Venezuelan President had told Barrios that if there were anything he could do for him not to hesitate to ask. This Barrios did, directly and boldly and successfully procured the release of the man!

The harshness of Barrios' nomadic life is reflected in the recurring theme of sadness and nostalgia in his works: he himself affirms the primacy of "sadness" in relation to the instrument's expressive meaning in the above cited poem *Mi Guitarra* when he declares that the guitar "takes joy in grieving" and that its voice is "a sigh" whose highest purpose is to express feeling. And in an imperfect world, feelings of sadness perhaps inevitably dominate.



One of life's pleasures that was not denied to Barrios was the fair sex and romantic love. It is known that he fathered two children with two different women (one before he initially departed Paraguay in 1910 – a son named Virgilio now deceased and a daughter, Nenequita, born in 1926 in Paraguay, also now deceased). Barrios, described as “an orangutan of a man” who had a “perfectly formed body” (due to his constant habit of gymnastic exercise) was not particularly handsome, but being the dynamic and extraordinary man that he was, he exerted a powerful effect over numerous ladies throughout his life. Many of his pieces are dedicated to women he had loved – the aforementioned “María Ester” for whom the *Mazurka Apasionata* was written; *Medallón Antiguo*, dedicated to an opera singer he fell in love with in Rio, begins with the first three notes of a song by Pergolesi which she reputedly sang. The “Old Medallion” refers to a piece of jewelry she habitually wore and which Barrios would always find some pretext to fondle upon their meeting in public, and in the process surreptitiously succeed in touching his beloved without anyone realizing it!

By the time he met Gloria Seban he was 45 years old. He had sown his wild oats many years earlier, and the impression one receives of their relationship is that it was to some degree romantic (particularly in the first four years) but that it was also quite pragmatic as Barrios did appreciate having someone who was satisfied with looking after his material needs – to cook his meals, wash and mend his clothes, etc., and who would put up with his itinerant life style. And when his health began to diminish, his dependence on Gloria became even greater. At a certain point he gave up on the idea of having a family as he sensed that it would take away from his “life as an artist” whose first priorities should always be one's art and one's public.

Another quality commented upon by many who knew Barrios was his voice. A critic once stated that it was difficult to choose which aspect of Barrios was the more pleasing – his mellow voice or his astounding playing. His voice has been described as “soothing” and “pleasant” and he was known to be a very eloquent conversationalist.

His religious convictions were more “theosophical” than strictly “Catholic”. For him God and Nature are inextricably part of one another, and Man, being part of Nature, is part of God. The only substantiated comments made by Barrios regarding his religious views come from the Brazilian newspaper *Jornal do Recife* of January 5, 1931:

In spite of a severe religious education, my primitive pantheism has pointed me in the direction of Theosophy, the most human and rational of philosophic concepts. I believe in the immutable laws of Nature. And Humanity and the Good impregnate my spirit as the ethical end of all existence.



Here his references to “severe religious education” and “primitive pantheism” are more an accommodation to bolster his identity as Chief Nitsuga Mangoré than an accurate statement of facts. But his mentioning theosophy and the “immutable laws of Nature” can be seen as sincere and genuine. Barrios was a humanist, an idealist, a romantic. He intuitively recognized that there is a relationship between the good, the true and the beautiful and that all these realities are reflected in love towards life and one’s fellow beings. Recognition of and resignation to these truths are powerfully expressed in the major key section of his last piece *Una Limosna por el Amor de Dios* – the composition closes with a definite affirmation of these eternal values that Barrios achieved and manifested throughout his life: love being the process, and truth, beauty and goodness being the byproducts.







## CHAPTER 8:

# BARRIOS THE COMPOSER

...Both Barrios and (Django) Reinhardt made and played their own music. Both were great in their own way, but both had one important thing in common. Disregarding their creative imagery and their fantastic techniques, they were incurable romantics who never lost touch with beauty. Perhaps that is why some people have no time for either of them.

Len Williams, 1978

The distinguishing characteristic of the music of Barrios is its balance of musical, technical and emotional factors. The way in which Barrios proceeds — how the hands work, the harmony and modulation he employs, and the emotional expressiveness and imagery he achieves — the unity of these elements support the claim that Barrios is “the greatest guitarist/composer of any time”. To illustrate this I have chosen a number of passages from some of his works<sup>1</sup>.

The guitar is an instrument that one must play in order to profoundly understand its technique and the musical parameters within which it can function effectively. When compared to the piano, the guitar is in fact a *labyrinth of limitations* from certain points of view, but it is also possesses unique possibilities (a common *rasgueado* strum being a case in point: no other instrument can produce the “harmonic-rhythmic” identity that strumming a simple chord on the guitar achieves). Thus the music in the concert guitar’s repertoire that comes from this tradition of the virtuoso composer-player has always occupied a special place — beginning with the vihuelistas of 16th century Spain (Mudarra, Narvaez, Milan) to the baroque guitarists (Corbetta, Sanz, DeVisee) to the early nineteenth century classicists (Sor, Giuliani, Aguado), culminating with Francisco Tárrega at the end of the 19th century. Barrios is the next link in this chain.

He was indeed fortunate that his initial years of formal study centered around the Aguado and Sor methodologies. In 1917 he discovered the music of Tárrega and with this last technical piece of the puzzle in place he started producing his best works. By latter 1918 he had written *Un Sueño en la Floresta* and had arranged Albano’s *Tarantella*. In 1919 and the first half of 1920 while still in Brazil he composed *Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello*, *Estudio de Concierto*, *Mazurka Apasionata*, *Vals No. 3* and



*Allegro Sinfónico*. Studying the classics and making transcriptions of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, etc. exerted a very strong influence at this time.

He was not exposed to nor was he interested in the “new currents and directions” that made greater use of dissonances, polytonality or atonality. Contrasting this period of Barrios’ life with that of Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959), one can see that in 1919 (about the time he wrote his *Choro No. 1* for guitar) Villa-Lobos was exclusively concerned with “new directions”, having been for several years the young champion of contemporary Brazilian music. It is quite probable that Villa-Lobos saw Barrios play in concert in Rio during this time. I find it doubtful that Barrios might have seen Villa-Lobos perform. It has been claimed that when asked for his opinion of Barrios, Villa-Lobos reputedly declared: “Inalcanzable” (“Unreachable”). The exact source of this quote is unsubstantiated and I doubt its authenticity.

The *Estudio de Concierto* is one of Barrios’ most ingenious works, utilizing a constant 16th note arpeggio figure that takes a beautiful and satisfying harmonic journey. The first section is in the tonic of A major (16 bars with a modulation in and out of B minor), followed by a modulation into C-sharp minor for 20 bars, then passing to E major (and C-sharp minor again) for 40 bars, at which point a grandiose 14 bar cadence appears transforming the tonic E to a dominant seventh function (E7), transitioning da capo back to the tonic A major. Its form is A-B-C-D-A. Taking into account that there is a didactic purpose in mind (control of the arpeggio technique), this remarkable study keeps both hands quite occupied: the right hand incessantly repeating (but also altering) the *a-m-i-p-i-m-a-m* pattern with the melody at times passing to the third string, and the left hand with position changes occurring at least once and many times twice per measure utilizing all positions from first through fourteenth. The challenge in writing this busy kind of texture is making harmony “lay” correctly on the fingerboard so that the right hand can keep a constant order and proportion as it repeats the sequence. The entire work is based on a parallel linear movement of voices, as seen in this example, measures 10 through 16:



Ex. 1 – *Estudio* ms. 10 - 16

The musical notation for Ex. 1 consists of three staves. The first staff shows a descending melodic line with chords  $I^6$  (A),  $I^6_5$  (Amaj.7),  $vii^o7/iii$  ( $B\sharp^o7$ ), and  $iii^6_4$  ( $C\sharp m$ ). The second staff continues the descent with  $V+^7/ii$  ( $F\sharp7+$ ),  $vii^o6_5/V$  ( $D\sharp m7b5$ ), and  $V^7$  (E7). The third staff concludes with the tonic  $I$  (A).

The melody drops an entire octave step-wise in a series of modulatory relationships, and when written as fixed horizontal chords appears thusly:

The diagram shows eight fixed horizontal chords, numbered 1 through 8, illustrating the step-wise descent of the melody. The chords are: 1 (A), 2 ( $F\sharp$ ), 3 ( $B\sharp$ ), 4 ( $D\sharp$ ), 5 ( $F\sharp$ ), 6 ( $D\sharp$ ), 7 (E), and 8 (A).

The tonic A major appears in the first inversion, over which the soprano voice lowers a half tone (to G sharp effecting the major 7th). This is followed by the melodic note F sharp (chord number 3) which he uses as the fifth of a B sharp diminished (as contrasted with its use as the third in a subdominant function). The same can be said of F sharp augmented seventh (chord number 5) – the melodic note D might suggest the root of the subdominant, but is here treated as a raised fifth (more correctly written as C double sharp). The use of C sharp on the D sharp minor flat 5 (chord number 6), creates the flatted seventh on the minor – a sonority more typical of 20th century jazz than early 19th century music. Yet it fits perfectly into this “classical” mold, adding color while simultaneously preserving the harmonic tension and logic of the linear voice movements, resolving perfectly to the fifth of the dominant seventh (the note B played on the open second string) which in turn resolves to the tonic on the third string. *The voicings of the chords in relation to the strings they are located on are perfectly realized.* The melodic idea, the technique of the coordinated movements of the hands, and the harmonic underpinning are completely unified. A similar effect is found in measures 22 through 26 of *Las Abejas*, his diabolic study of arpeggios:



Ex. 2 – *Las Abejas* ms. 22 - 26

The musical score consists of four staves of music in treble clef, 3/4 time. The first staff contains four measures with chords:  $iv_4^6$  (Gm), Ger. 6 (B $\flat$ 7), V $^6$  (A), and  $vii_3^{o4}/iv$  (F $\sharp$ 7). The second staff contains four measures with chords: IV $^6$  (G),  $vii_3^{o7}/VI$  (E $^\circ$ 7), VI $^6$  (F), and  $vii_3^{o7}/V$  (G $\sharp$ 7). The third staff contains two measures with chords:  $ii_5^6$  (Em7 $\flat$ 5) and  $ii_5^6$ . The fourth staff contains two measures with chords: V $^{sus.4}$  (A $^{sus.}$ ) and V (A).

The same observations can be made here: the unification of the physical-mental-emotional (and ultimately spiritual) as a cohesive, artistic statement is perfect. The expressiveness achieved, the level of technique necessary to realize the work, the harmonic development and the musical form of the piece – all of these factors are ingeniously and fully realized and stylistically integrated.

In Barrios one finds honesty, no matter what level of complexity the work in question involves. *El Sueño de la Muñequita*, even though it is one of his simplest pieces (from a technical point of view), nevertheless achieves a charming effect and is profoundly moving and evocative of the beauty and innocence of a sleeping child:



Ex. 3 – *El Sueño de la Muñequita* ms. 1 - 16

The musical score is written in 3/4 time and consists of three staves. The first staff contains measures 1-5 with chords *i*, *i*<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, *V*<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, *V*<sup>7</sup>, and *V*<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>. The second staff contains measures 6-10 with chords *V*<sup>7</sup>, *i*, *i*<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, *i*, and *v*<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>. The third staff contains measures 11-14 with chords *v*<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, *V*<sup>4</sup><sub>3/V</sub>, *V*<sup>7</sup><sub>/V</sub>, and *V*<sup>7,9</sup>. The bass line is indicated by a 'p.' symbol.

This basic sincerity in all that he created is a spiritual quality that speaks eternally to the human soul. Barrios' music attempts to express a view of infinite beauty, and rather than judging it as "out of period", "overly sentimental", "old fashioned" or "too difficult to play", one should enter into a potentially hazardous state of hypersensitivity to one's emotions when interpreting Barrios. To equal the level of emotionality that Barrios lived would probably be a hindrance in today's fast-paced, self-centered, materialistic world. Remember that one of his favorite books was *Don Quijote*.

As stated above, when composing Barrios preferred to be left completely alone with no interruptions. If he reached the stage where he would commit to pencil and paper, he might make several drafts, perhaps changing passages as he developed his musical ideas. I think he found this entire process of writing out music a bit laborious and perhaps somewhat boring. Barrios' musical instincts were more attuned to the *act of playing*. His considerable technical abilities made playing the guitar an almost "mystical act" wherein God could be reached through the expression of beautiful music and the emotions it inspires.



The highest level of his activity as a composer and artist was reached in spontaneous improvisation. The musician must coordinate everything in time and space and attempt to achieve expression and forms of construction that are both beautiful, ingenious and virtuosic. In other words: improvising was where it *all* came together. Savio commented how in the Trápani Music Store in Montevideo, where he “was accustomed to go every afternoon”, Barrios would improvise “on those six strings, extremely beautiful musical phrases that caught everyone’s attention.” In San Salvador Trejos confirms that Barrios many times would ask a student to choose a key center, and upon doing so, commence improvising surprisingly appealing and complex musical phrases in that key. Morales stated that many times he heard Barrios improvise in concert on his own works, and when queried afterwards why he “changed” a piece, he replied “Che, inspiration overtook me, and I forgot I was giving a concert!”

The story is related by Rene and Cortés Andrino of an occasion in San Salvador where a local, popular “semi-literate” guitarist and mandolinist, Miguel Angel Ayala, visited Barrios one morning and played for the Maestro two simple waltzes of his own creation – one in E major and the other in d minor. He wanted Barrios to hear them and “correct” them. Ayala played the first one in E, and upon finishing, Mangoré grabbed the guitar and played the entire piece, replete with harmonics and ornaments, without error. Ayala then played the second waltz and the same thing occurred! The Andrinos recalled that after this, Barrios was quite exhausted (reflecting the impaired state of his health in those last years and underscoring the fact that the act of improvisation is a very demanding physical/mental exertion).

The reader will recall that Barrios improvised music on an organ that was in the apartment Tomás Salomoni rented in Berlin in 1935. Barrios thought in strictly musical terms, and knew the science of harmony. His mind was hearing the sounds before searching them out with the fingers, and as such, it didn’t matter what medium was chosen to express harmonic relationships between tones – he of course preferred his guitar, but he could do it on a keyboard, and probably any other kind of instrument on which he may have focused.

Some of his formally written pieces actually sound “improvised”. The *Preludio* in b minor that he wrote in Havana in 1938 is one of his greatest creations and has this quality. Here the melody begins in 14th position, and the accompaniment in the underlying arpeggio ingeniously utilizes the open B of the second string against notes on the third and fourth strings fretted in the tenth and eleventh positions. In this amazing prelude the quality of its subtitle – “Saudade” (Portuguese for something like, but not exactly, “nostalgia” or “a yearning for”) – is eminently and eloquently expressed:



Ex. 4 – *Preludio* ms. 1 - 6

The musical score consists of three staves of music in 2/4 time, written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is characterized by a series of eighth-note chords, each with a specific harmonic label above it.

- Staff 1:**
  - Measure 1: Chord *i* (Bm) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 2: Chord *ii* (C#m7b5) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 3: Chord *ii* (C#m7b5) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 4: Chord *ii* (C#m7b5) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 5: Chord *ii* (C#m7b5) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 6: Chord *ii* (C#m7b5) with a sharp sign above the note.
- Staff 2:**
  - Measure 1: Chord *ii* (C#m7b5) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 2: Chord *i* (Bm) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 3: Chord *i* (Bm) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 4: Chord *D: IV* (D: IV<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 5: Chord *D: IV* (D: IV<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 6: Chord *D: IV* (D: IV<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>) with a sharp sign above the note.
- Staff 3:**
  - Measure 1: Chord *V<sup>4</sup>/V* (E7) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 2: Chord *V<sup>13</sup>* (A13) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 3: Chord *V<sup>13</sup>* (A13) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 4: Chord *I<sup>6</sup>* (D) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 5: Chord *I<sup>6</sup>* (D) with a sharp sign above the note.
  - Measure 6: Chord *I<sup>6</sup>* (D) with a sharp sign above the note.

The melody begins high and throughout the entire piece slowly descends an entire octave in a series of modulatory relationships that are “legitimate” and beautiful. The level of technical realization is masterful. I think Barrios wrote this at a particularly sad and difficult time, near the end of his six month long stay in Cuba when there was no work or hope on the horizon and he was in poor financial shape with diminished health. No wonder he must have felt a longing for something better from former days.

The barcarola *Julia Florida* was written about a year later and is undoubtedly one of his most outstanding creations. After *Julia Florida*, Barrios created three more major pieces that have been located in manuscript and published<sup>2</sup>: in 1939 *Variaciones sobre el Punto Guanacasteco* (“Variations on the Punto Guanacasteco” – a Costa Rican dance) and *Variaciones sobre un Tema de Tárrega* (“Variations on a Theme of Tárrega” – six variations on *Lágrima*) and the well known tremolo *Una Limosna por el Amor de Dios* (“An Alm for the Love of God” which, being the last major piece he wrote, has been posthumously and erroneously called *El Ultimo Canto* – “The Last Song” – or *El Ultimo Trémolo* – “The Last Tremolo”). In all of these works an even more refined level of technique and expression is attained, reflecting the maturity and subsequent transcendence Barrios had achieved after half a century of dedication to his art. This passage from *Julia Florida*, measures 52 through 56, is an example of this mastery:



Ex. 5 – *Julia Florida* ms. 52 - 56

Chords and Roman numerals for Ex. 5:

- Staff 1:  $A_m$ ,  $Bm7\flat 5$ ,  $A_m$
- Staff 2:  $A7$ ,  $F\sharp o7$ ,  $G9$ ,  $A9$
- Roman numerals:  $a: i$ ,  $ii\phi_5$ ,  $i$ ,  $V_2^7/iv$ ,  $arm$ ,  $vii\phi/VII$ ,  $V_2^7/III$ ,  $D: V_3^4$

Here Barrios has arrived in the key center of a minor, and he modulates back to D major in a beautiful descending passage utilizing four chords, all of which end with the note A employed as a pedal (played as a natural harmonic at the seventh fret of the fourth string). The impression of the light bell-like harmonic tone following the heavier descending notes (which are placed in the bass and midrange) is very effective, as is the chromatic movement of the harmony.

Barrios did not really invent any new techniques, he simply extended and refined “post-Tárrega” guitar technique to obtain a new level of expression. A recurring feature of his left hand technique is the use of long stretches, as in this cadential passage from *Las Abejas* (measures 31-36):

Ex. 6 – *Las Abejas* ms. 31 - 36

Chords and Roman numerals for Ex. 6:

- Staff 1:  $Em7\flat 5$ ,  $A7\text{ sus}$ ,  $A7$ ,  $C7$
- Staff 2:  $Em$ ,  $C7$ ,  $A7$
- Roman numerals:  $ii\phi_7$ ,  $V_{sus.4}^7$ ,  $V^7$ ,  $V_2^4/III$ ,  $ii\phi_4$ ,  $V^7/III$ ,  $V_5^6$



The movement of voices requires that the left hand expand at both ends, ultimately reaching the dominant in a not too typical voicing requiring an extension of seven frets. This is difficult, but not impossible or even unreasonable (given the context of the complete passage in which it occurs). But the left hand must know how to function – very extended and “up and over” the soundboard – otherwise, one cannot even come close to making these kinds of extended postures that are a basic characteristic of Barrios’ technical/harmonic approach. In his soulful *Choro da Saudade* there are numerous long stretches, one of which many guitarists find impossible (measures 27-29):

Ex. 7 – *Choro da Saudade* ms. 27 - 29

New evidence reveals that this fingering is not Barrios’ original solution, but rather that of someone else (probably the Brazilian guitarist Atilio Bernardini) who edited the posthumous edition that Romeo DiGiorgio published in Brazil which contains the version of the *Choro* upon which all present-day published versions are based.<sup>3</sup> The original Barrios, as seen in a hand-written manuscript in Uruguay by Sila Godoy, is this:

Ex. 7 – *Choro da Saudade* ms. 27 - 29



Here is probably the first use of a cross-barre in the literature. Again, the solution is difficult but not impossible and quite logical. The barre that occurs in the second measure of the example above in the second position is preparing perfectly for the cross-barre that follows. It is very effective, somewhat novel, and considerably easier than the above-cited "erroneous fingering".

The effect known as *campanella* (where a note is repeated on an open string against constantly changing harmonies on surrounding strings) is a well-known device in music for guitar. Here is perhaps the most extended use of this device, from his *Vals Op. 8, No. 4*, (which contains a section of 36 measures total that features a delightful harmonic movement around the open E of the first string). Here is the last half of this section (measures 117-126):

Ex. 8 – *Vals* ms. 117 - 126

The musical score for Ex. 8, measures 117-126, is presented in five lines of music. Each line contains four measures. The first string (open E) is held down by a barre in every measure. The harmonies change in each measure, as indicated by the chord symbols above the staff. The sequence of chords is: I (D), V<sub>3+</sub>/IV (D+), IV (G), vi<sub>4</sub> (Bm), IV (G), IV (G), V<sub>5</sub>/V (E7), I<sub>4</sub> (D), V<sub>5</sub>/V (E7), D, V<sub>5</sub>/vi (F#7), vii<sub>4</sub>/2 (C#m7<sup>b</sup>5), V<sub>5</sub>/vi (F#7), V<sub>3</sub>/V (E7), V<sub>5</sub> (A7), IV<sub>4</sub> (G), V<sub>5</sub> (A7), IV<sub>4</sub> (G), V<sub>5</sub> (A7), IV<sub>4</sub> (G), V<sub>7(b9)</sub> (A9), and A7.



Playing the melody in the bass register is a typical guitaristic device that Barrios elevates to perhaps its most complex level of conception and execution, as seen in this example taken from his *Romance in Imitation of the Cello*, measures 18 through 33:

Ex. 9 – *Romanza* ms. 18 - 33

The musical score for Ex. 9, measures 18-33, is presented in four systems. Each system consists of a treble staff and a bass staff. The melody is written in the bass register. Chord symbols are indicated below the bass staff for each measure.

System 1 (Measures 18-20):  
 Measure 18: I, D  
 Measure 19: vii<sup>o</sup><sub>3</sub>/V, G#<sup>o</sup>7  
 Measure 20: V<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>, A7

System 2 (Measures 21-23):  
 Measure 21: vii<sup>o</sup>7, I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, C#<sup>o</sup>7/D  
 Measure 22: I, D  
 Measure 23: V<sup>7</sup>/V, E7, V<sup>7</sup><sub>9</sub>/V, E7,9 (B#<sup>o</sup>), V<sup>6</sup>, A (C#<sup>o</sup>)

System 3 (Measures 24-26):  
 Measure 24: I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, D  
 Measure 25: iii, F#m  
 Measure 26: vii<sup>o</sup>6, C#<sup>o</sup>, I, D

System 4 (Measures 27-29):  
 Measure 27: V<sup>7</sup>/IV, D7  
 Measure 28: IV<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, G  
 Measure 29: IV<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>, G

Barrios loved the music of J.S. Bach. "How well Bach elevates us to the eternal" — these were his feelings about Bach. His remarkable *Preludio Op. 5, No. 1* (in g minor) is an homage to Bach written in a baroque-like prelude form, making use of the concept of the pedal as seen in this example from measures 72-83:



Ex. 10 – *Preludio* ms. 72 - 83

The musical notation consists of four staves, each containing a sequence of notes with various chord labels above and below them. The notes are written in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The chords are labeled as follows:

- Staff 1:  $V^7$  (D7),  $V^7/iv$  (G7)
- Staff 2:  $V^7/VII$  (C7)
- Staff 3:  $V^7/III$  (F7),  $V^7/VI$  (B $\flat$ 7)
- Staff 4:  $V^7/N$  (E $\flat$ 7),  $N(\flat II)$  (A $\flat$ ),  $V^7/VI$  (B $\flat$ 7)

The *Variations on a Theme of Tárrega* is undoubtedly one of his most technically demanding pieces. It explores many areas of guitar technique: arpeggios, scales, slurring, harmonics and tremolo. Paying homage to Tárrega's *Lágrima*, it consists of six variations that demonstrate Barrios' mastery of all aspects of guitar technique and composition. This piece is given in its entirety as it contains some of his most mature writing and is a fitting way to close this chapter on Barrios the composer:



# Variations on a Theme of Tárrega

Agustín Barrios Mangoré

Andantino  
scherzando

C2 C2 C2 C4 C2



# Variations on a Theme of Tárrega-2



Tempo giusto





### Variations on a Theme of Tárrega-3

A musical score for a piece titled "Ave Maria" by Franz Schubert. The score is written for a single melodic line, likely for a voice or a single instrument, using a treble clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating the key of D major or A minor. The time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and fingerings. There are also dynamic markings like "C2" and "C4". The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple notes and rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Arms. octavados  
Ben marcato il canto

⑤

C7

2 3 4 2 1 4 2 1 0 4 1 0 3 0 2

1 2 1 4 2 1 0 4 1 0 3 0 2

0 2 1 0 3 0 2



# Variations on a Theme of Tárrega-4

The musical score consists of six staves of music in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. The notation includes various guitar-specific techniques such as triplets, slurs, and fingering numbers (1-4) and circled numbers (2-6) indicating fingerings. The first staff features a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff includes a triplet of eighth notes and a circled 2. The third staff features a triplet of eighth notes and a circled 3. The fourth staff includes a triplet of eighth notes and a circled 4. The fifth staff features a triplet of eighth notes and a circled 5. The sixth staff includes a triplet of eighth notes and a circled 6. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.



# Variations on a Theme of Tárrega-5

6

7

Andante con anima

3

3

3

3

3



# Variations on a Theme of Tárrega-6

Allegro

The musical score is written for guitar in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes various fingering numbers (0-4) and articulation marks (accents, slurs, and slurs with dots). The staves are labeled with 'C4', 'C5', and 'C2' at various points, indicating specific chords or positions. The first staff has a key signature change to G major. The second staff has a key signature change to G major. The third staff has a key signature change to G major. The fourth staff has a key signature change to G major. The fifth staff has a key signature change to G major. The sixth staff has a key signature change to G major. The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Staff 1: C4, 0 1 2 1 0, 0 1 3 1 0, 0 1 3 1 0, 0 3 1 3 0, 1 1 1 4 1 3, 0 2 4 1 2 0

Staff 2: C4

Staff 3: C5, C2

Staff 4: C2, C2

Staff 5: C2

Staff 6: C7, C4



Variations on a Theme of Tárrega-7

**C2**

**C7**

**Andante**

**C3**

**C7**

*expressivo*

*rallentando*

*f*

Composed November, 1939, Guatemala



## APPENDIX A:

# THE RECORDINGS OF BARRIOS

Thus far 31 commercial 78 r.p.m. phonograph recordings containing a total of 62 cuts (comprising 57 titles) have been located. His discography can be divided into two periods: a) the earliest recordings done in 1913 in Montevideo for the Atlanta/Artigas label; and b) those done over a period of eight years (1921-29) for the Odeon label in Buenos Aires. The majority of these recordings were released on 10 inch discs (only three of the Odeon discs being 12 inches). He also recorded in 1943 in San Salvador two discs made on a Crosley Home Recorder owned by Alfredo Massi (the owner of a local theatre who contracted Barrios for performances during the last years in El Salvador). All of these recordings represent a priceless legacy and in many ways are perhaps the most valuable resource for understanding his music and style while appreciating his virtuosity.

### Selections on Disc

### Label and Serial Numbers

- |                                       |                |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Ay, Ay, Ay (Perez Freire)          | Atlanta 304    |
| Marcha Paraguaya (Dupuy)              | Atlanta 304    |
| 2. Tango No. 2 (Barrios)              | Atlanta 65.364 |
| La Paloma (Yradier)                   | Atlanta 65.367 |
| 3. Vidalita con Variaciones (Barrios) | Atlanta 65.365 |
| Don Perez Freire (Barrios)            | Atlanta 65.366 |
| 4. Matilde (García Tolsa)             | Atlanta 65.370 |
| Divagación Chopiniana (García Tolsa)  | Atlanta 65.374 |
| 5. Jota-1st part (Barrios)            | Atlanta 65.371 |
| Jota-2nd part (Barrios)               | Atlanta 65.372 |
| 6. Milonga (Barrios)                  | Artigas 65.373 |
| Madrigal-gavota (Sosa Escalada)       | Artigas 65.375 |
| 7. San Lorenzo March (Silva)          | Atlanta 65.377 |
| Divagación (Barrios)                  | Atlanta 65.385 |
| 8. A Mi Madre-sonatina (Barrios)      | Atlanta 65.379 |
| A Mi Madre-2nd part                   | Atlanta 65.380 |
| 9. Pepita Waltz (Barrios)             | Atlanta 65.381 |
| Pepita Waltz-2nd part                 | Atlanta 65.382 |



# Los Mejores Discos DEL MUNDO



Los Discos y Grafófonos Atlanta  
son los de más duración y los que  
producen los sonidos con más  
perfección. Cada uno \$ 16 m/ c/l.

SANTERIA Y GRAN TALLER DE MARCOS  
PARA CUADROS

**D. MORSELLI**

GENERAL DIAZ 284

Casilla de Correo 182 Asunción (Paraguay)

This advertisement for Atlanta Records appeared in *Crónica*, a magazine that began publication in Asunción in April 1913 and lasted not quite two years. Viriato Diaz Perez was a regular contributor to this monthly magazine which was published by Barrios' friend Leopoldo Centurión. The fact that Atlanta Records placed an ad in a Paraguayan publication underscores the assertion that Barrios did indeed make recordings in Montevideo commencing in 1913 for this label and that they were commercially available at that time.



10.	La Bananita-tango (Barrios)	Artigas 65.393
	Aires Criollos (Barrios)	Artigas 65.396
11.	Aires Andaluces (Barrios)	Atlanta 65.394
	Aires Andaluces-2nd part	Atlanta 65.395
12.	Oro y Plata Waltz (Lehar)	(unknown) 21.076
	Divagaciones Criollas (Barrios)	21.077
13.	Tarantella (Conceicao-Barrios)	Odeon 54.235
14.	Aire de Zamba (Barrios)	Odeon 951-A
	Minuet in A (Barrios)	Odeon 951-B
15.	Minuet (Beethoven)	Odeon 953-A
	Córdoba-estilo criollo (Barrios)	Odeon 953-B
16.	Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)	Odeon 954-A
	Sarita-mazurka (Barrios)	Odeon 954-B
17.	Romanza (Barrios)	Odeon 200-A
	Aire Popular Paraguayo (Barrios)	Odeon 200-B
18.	Loure (Bach)	Odeon 201-A
	Luz Mala-estilo (Barrios)	Odeon 201-B
19.	Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)	Odeon 202-A
	Minuet (Beethoven)	Odeon 202-B
20.	Danza Paraguaya (Barrios)	Odeon 203-A
	Cueca (Barrios)	Odeon 203-B
21.	Aconquija (Barrios)	Odeon 204-A
	Junto a tu Corazón (Barrios)	Odeon 204-B
22.	Oración (Barrios)	Odeon 205-A
	Vals Op. 8, No. 4 (Barrios)	Odeon 205-B
23.	Maxixa (Barrios)	Odeon 206-A
	Mazurka-Sarita (Barrios)	Odeon 206-B
24.	Traumerei (Schumann)	Odeon 207-A
	Tarentella (Conceicao-Barrios)	Odeon 207-B
25.	Souvenir d'un Reve (Barrios)	Odeon 208-A
	Souvenir d'un Reve-2nd part	Odeon 208-B
26.	Ay, Ay, Ay (Perez Freire)	Odeon 209-A
	Madrigal-gavota (Barrios)	Odeon 209-B
27.	Vals Op. 8, No. 3 (Barrios)	Odeon 210-A
	Minuet, Op. 11, No. 6 (Sor)	Odeon 210-B
28.	La Catedral (Barrios)	Odeon 210-A (12 inch)
	Armonías de America (Barrios)	Odeon 210-B
29.	Confesión (Barrios)	Odeon 211-A
	Aire de Zamba (Barrios)	Odeon 211-B
30.	Pericón (Barrios)	Odeon 40070-A (12 inch)
	Contemplación (Barrios)	Odeon 40070-B



- |     |                                 |                            |
|-----|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 31. | Invocación a Mi Madre (Barrios) | Odeon Proof disc (12 inch) |
| 32. | Invocación a la Luna            | Crosley Discs              |
|     | Diana Guaraní                   |                            |
|     | El Sueño de la Muñequita        |                            |

At least six of these recordings were released by Odeon in Brazil:

- |    |                                  |              |
|----|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Aconquija (Barrios)              | Odeon 1668-A |
|    | Junto a tu Corazón (Barrios)     | Odeon 1668-B |
| 2. | Souvenir d'un Reve (Barrios)     | Odeon 1538-A |
|    | Souvenir d'un Reve-2nd part      | Odeon 1538-B |
| 3. | Ay, Ay, Ay (Perez Freire)        | Odeon 1562-A |
|    | Madrigal-gavota (Barrios)        | Odeon 1562-B |
| 4. | Minuet (Beethoven)               | Odeon 1581-A |
|    | Aire Popular Paraguayo (Barrios) | Odeon 1581-B |
| 5. | Tarantella (Conceicao-Barrios)   | Odeon 1599-A |
|    | Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)         | Odeon 1599-B |
| 6. | La Catedral (Barrios)            | Odeon 5099-A |
|    | Armonías de América (Barrios)    | Odeon 5099-B |

It is quite probable that there are even more of his recordings to be found: for example, he refers to having recorded (on "one-sided" discs only in October 1921) the selections *Página d' Album (Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello)*, *Vals No. 3*, *Canzoneta*, *Aires Criollos* and *Madrigal Gavota*. No Odeon recording of his *Canzoneta* or *Aires Criollos* has yet been located and, according to Odeon Industries in Argentina, he re-recorded *Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello*, *Vals No. 3* and *Madrigal* in 1928:

TITLE	DATE RECORDED
Danza Paraguaya	April 17, 1928
Danza Paraguaya (2nd take)	April 17, 1928
Capricho Arabe	April 17, 1928
Capricho Arabe (2nd take)	April 17, 1928
Minuet (Beethoven)	April 17, 1928
Cueca	April 17, 1928
Loure (Bach)	April 18, 1928
Luz Mala-estilo	April 18, 1928
Romanza	May 10, 1928
Romanza (2nd take)	May 10, 1928
Aire Popular Paraguayo	May 10, 1928
Cueca (2nd take)	May 10, 1928
Cueca (3rd take)	May 10, 1928



Minuet (Barrios)	May 23, 1928
Maxixa	May 23, 1928
Maxixa (2nd take)	May 23, 1928
Mazurka-Sarita	May 23, 1928
Mazurka (2nd take)	May 23, 1928
Maxixa (3rd take)	May 29, 1928
Madrigal Gavota	May 29, 1928
Aconquija	May 29, 1928
Aconquija (2nd take)	May 29, 1928
Junto a tu Corazón	May 29, 1928
Junto a tu Corazón (2nd take)	May 29, 1928
Contemplación	June 20, 1928
Junto a tu Corazón (3rd take)	June 20, 1928
Pericón	June 20, 1928
Maxixa (4th take)	June 20, 1928
Traumerei (Schumann)	June 21, 1928
Minuet (3rd take)	June 21, 1928
Tarantella	June 21, 1928
Aconquija (3rd take)	June 21, 1928
Confesión	June 21, 1928
Confesión (2nd take)	June 21, 1928
Aire de Zamba	June 21, 1928
Aire de Zamba (2nd take)	June 21, 1928
Souvenir d'un Reve-1st part	July 28, 1928
Souvenir d'un Reve-2nd part	July 31, 1928
Ay, Ay, Ay (Perez Freire)	July 31, 1928
Vals No. 3	July 31, 1928
La Catedral	August 1, 1928
Oración	March 27, 1929
Vals No. 4	March 27, 1929
Armonías de América	March 27, 1929
Armonías de América (2nd take)	March 27, 1929
Ay, Ay, Ay (2nd take)	April 2, 1929
Ay, Ay, Ay (3rd take)	April 2, 1929
Confesión (3rd take)	April 2, 1929
Aire de Zamba (3rd take)	April 2, 1929
Invocación a Mi Madre	April 19, 1929

Barrios referred to a five year contract with a minimum of 5 records per year starting in 1921. The next time he was in Buenos Aires was in 1923, at which time he may have done more recordings for Max Glucksman, who ran Odeon Recording Company. In May 1924 he alluded to his projected





Labels from the Uruguayan-based company Atlanta/Artigas. Note that the records, though recorded in Uruguay, were actually produced in Germany.





Labels from recordings released by Odeon. Note the different label styles and also the stamps on some, upon which can be seen Barrios' signature.



departure for Buenos Aires "to record six records for Glucksman House." Of the 19 known records that Barrios made for Odeon, 15 were recorded in the above cited sessions during 1928-29. Thus it can be deduced that only 4 of the remaining recordings were done between 1921 and 1928. I think that Barrios did more than just four records in those 7 years and that future research will locate the "missing Odeon recordings". Impressive as it is, Barrios' discography is still not complete.



## APPENDIX B:

# THE GUITARS OF BARRIOS

As a youth Barrios played on guitars made in his homeland. Of the two photos from this period that contain guitars (see pages 36 and 41), both instruments have wooden peg tuners (and probably metal strings). As stated above, when he first arrived in Buenos Aires in 1910 he was given a guitar made by the Spanish luthier José Ramirez de Galarreta (b. 1885), a cousin to the more well known Manuel Ramirez de Galarreta. José Ramirez moved to Buenos Aires in 1905 and stayed in the Argentine capitol for fifteen years before returning to Madrid. Barrios used this guitar until 1915, when it was damaged and he gave it to a friend in Tranqueras, Uruguay, writing in ink on the guitar this inscription: "Dear Modesto: I leave you this piece of my wavering soul in testimony of the sincerity of my affection for you and yours. A. Barrios, Tranqueras, July 6, 1915." This guitar reputedly suffered submersion in water as a result of an accident that occurred when he was crossing a river in an automobile. The car was loaded onto a raft but lost its moorings and fell into the river. He evidently obtained another guitar by José Ramirez for the program given in Buenos Aires in 1923 lists at the bottom "Guitar: José Ramirez" (see page 85). He also referred in 1926 to his "Ramirez" making the "artistic-musical payment" for a party he attended in Cerro Chato, Uruguay (see page 98).

Barrios also owned guitars by Brazilian luthier Romeo DiGiorgio as well as Argentine maker Rodolfo Camacho (1887-1973). In 1925 Barrios stated that Camacho had "obtained a place at the level of the most distinguished guitar builders of today". He also owned instruments by Spanish luthiers Domingo Esteso, Enrique García, Enrique Sanfeliu and Morant. On all of these instruments he used steel strings. The guitar by Enrique García (dated 1923) is today in a private collection in Sao Paulo. It exhibits the effects of the added pull exerted by steel strings: the bridge is slightly raised and pulled forward, and the top itself is bowed slightly upward back of the bridge. This guitar I found very playable, but not capable of great volume.

In Paraguay the guitar Barrios used by Sanfeliu (dated Barcelona, 1930) is today kept by the Ministry of Culture. It has the extra 20th fret that Barrios found necessary. This guitar was given to Luisa Lebrón de Salomoni and was brought back to Paraguay when the Salomonis returned in 1936. The

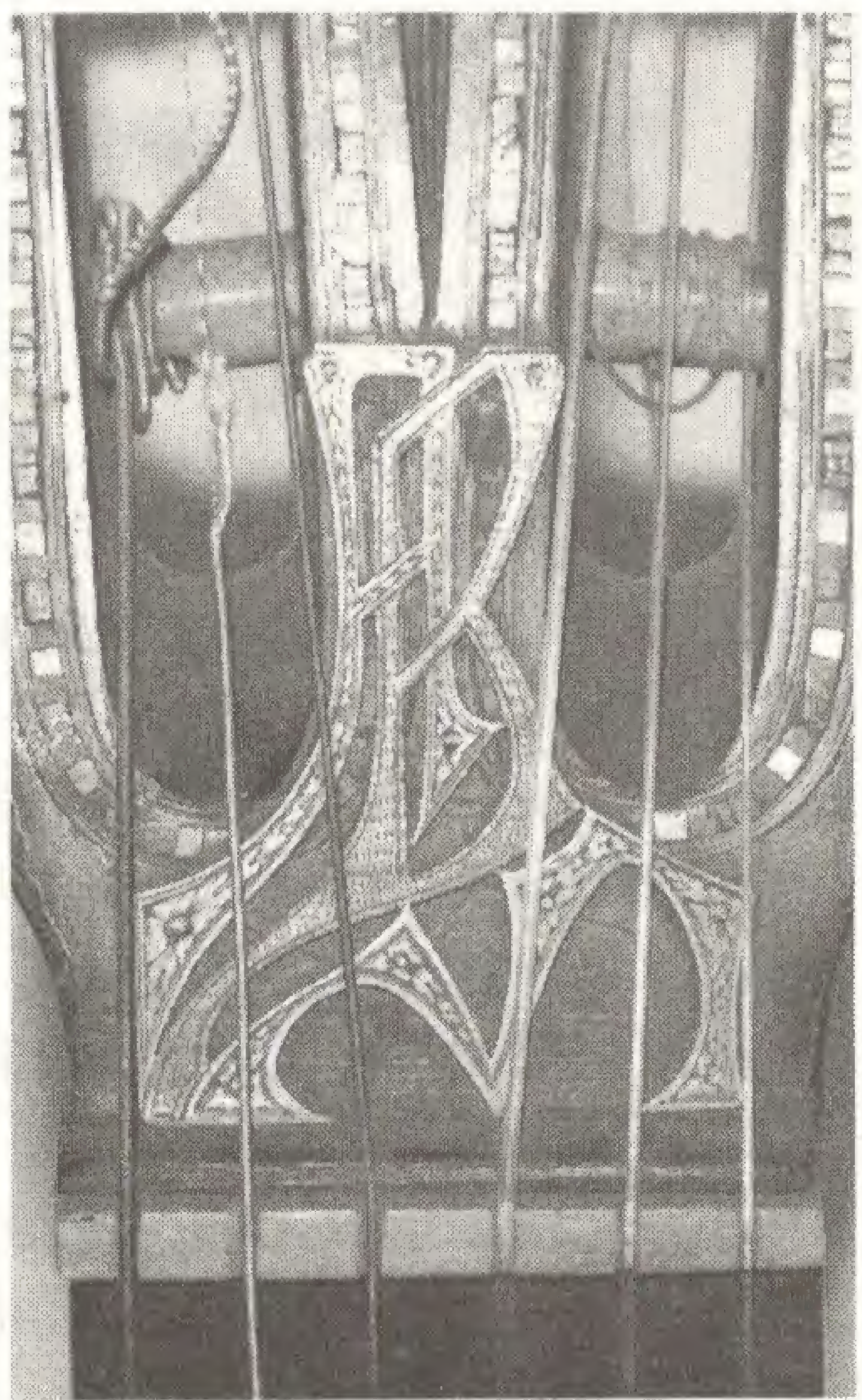
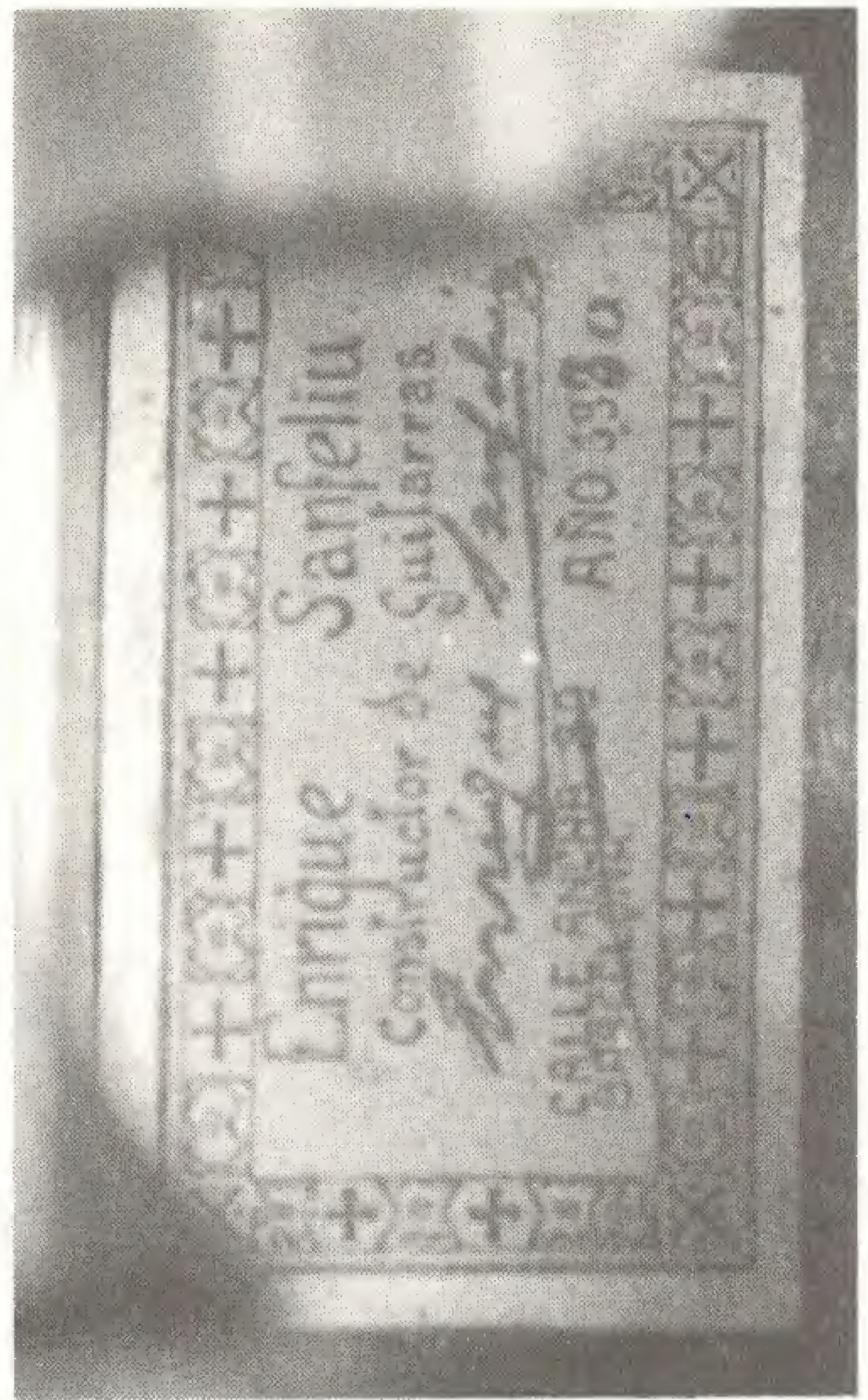
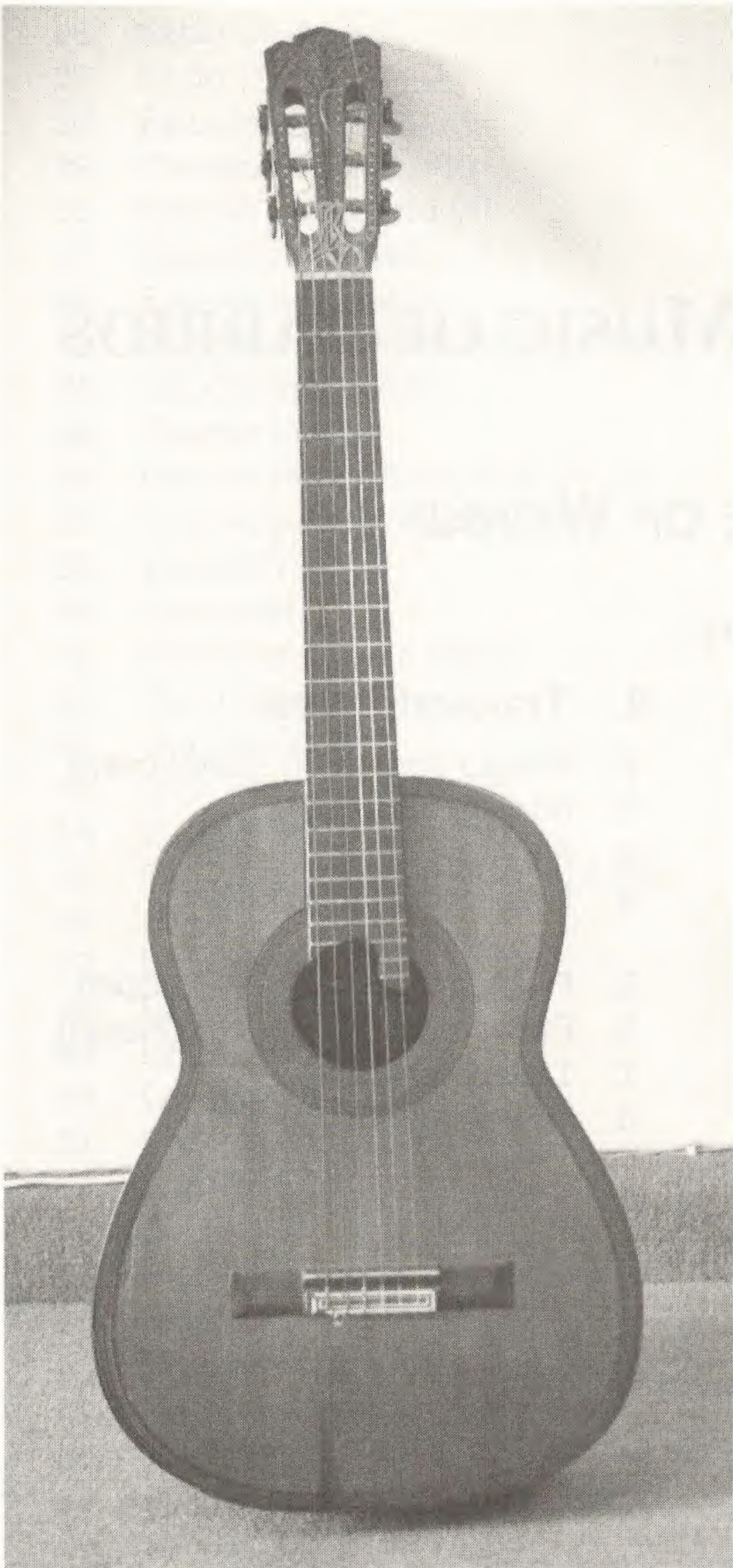


instrument has an elegant inlay in gold trim of the initials A. B. M., obviously an addition made in Brazil at the same time the new fretboard was added (circa 1930).

The only comments attributable to Barrios about his guitars comes from Dr. Edgeworth Johnstone (see page 158), who stated "I asked him about his guitar. It was made by Domingo Esteso, of Madrid, and he said it was better than a Simplicio, which is what I had." This Esteso I believe was his preferred instrument. He acquired it at some point during the time he was with Tomás Salomoni. This guitar he kept till the end of his days. It was sold by Gloria for 6000 colones after his death to a "wealthy lady who studied guitar with him in San Salvador". She returned to Germany after the war and took the guitar with her.

Analyzing Barrios' phonograph recordings, it can be noted that he tuned his guitars somewhere between a half step to a whole step flat relative to concert pitch (A at 440 vibrations per second). This was to reduce somewhat the greatly increased tension of the pull exerted by steel strings on the bridge. It also may have had something to do with "the sound" of the instrument—by tuning slightly low a different sonority is obtained. I also believe that Barrios tuned his strings according to "feel" — at a certain tension (without regard for matching concert pitch) that felt "right" to him. As stated above, eyewitness testimony by several different people in different locations attests to the fact that Barrios used metal strings for a) the 1st only; b) all three treble strings; or c) all six strings.





Three views of the Sanfeliu guitar in the Ministry of Education and Culture in Asunción. Barrios acquired this instrument in 1930 in Brazil and had a 20-fret neck installed along with the custom gold inlay of his initials A.B.M.



## APPENDIX C:

# THE MUSIC OF BARRIOS

## TABLE OF WORKS

### WORKS IN MANUSCRIPT:

#### I. Original Works:

1. Abrí la Puerta Mi China
2. Aconquija (Aire de Quena)
3. Aire de Zamba
4. Aire Popular Paraguayo (Caazapá)
5. Allegro Sinfónico
6. Altair
7. A Mi Madre
8. Arabescos
9. Armonías de America
10. Canción de Cuna
11. Canción de la Hilandera
12. Capricho Español
13. Choro da Saudade
14. Confesión (Confissao de Amor)
15. Contemplación
16. Córdoba (Cordobesa)
17. Cueca (Danza Chilena)
18. Danza en Re Menor
19. Danza Guaraní
20. Danza Paraguaya
21. Dinora
22. Divagación
23. Don Perez Freire
24. El Sueño de la Muñequita
25. Escala y Preludio

#### II. Transcriptions:

1. Adagio Sonata XIV (Beethoven)
2. Andante (Haydn)
3. Ay, Ay, Ay (Perez Freire)
4. Minuet (Beethoven)
5. Prelude Op. 28, No. 4 (Chopin)
6. Prelude Op. 28, No. 20 (Chopin)
7. Traumerei (Schumann)
8. Tu y Yo (Czibulka)



26. Estilo Uruguayo
27. Estilo
28. Estudio (A)
29. Estudio de Concierto
30. Estudio del Ligado (A)
31. Estudio del Ligado (d)
32. Estudio en Arpeggio
33. Estudio en Si Menor (solo guitar)
34. Estudio Inconcluso
35. Estudio No. 3
36. Estudio No. 6 (Study in E Minor)
37. Estudio para Ambas Manos
38. Estudio Vals
39. Fabiniana
40. Gavota al Estilo Antiguo
41. Humoresque
41. Jha Che Valle
43. Julia Florida (barcarola)
44. Junto a tu Corazón
45. Kyguá Verá (for voice and piano)
46. La Catedral
47. La Mabelita
48. La Samaritana
49. Las Abejas
50. Leyenda de España
51. Londón Carapé
52. Luz Mala
53. Madrecita
54. Madrigal
55. Maxixe
56. Mazurka Apasionata
57. Medallón Antiguo
58. Milonga
59. Minuet (A)
60. Minuet (A)
61. Minuet (B)
62. Minuet (C)
63. Minuet (E)
64. Oración (Oración de la Tarde)
65. Oración por Todos
66. País de Abanico
67. Pepita



68. Pericón
69. Preludio Op. 5, No. 1
70. Preludio (E)
71. Preludio (a)
72. Preludio (b)
73. Preludio (c)
74. Preludio (e)
75. Romaza en Imitación al Violoncello (Página d' Album, Fuegos Fátuos)
76. Santa Fe
77. Sargento Cabral
78. Sarita
79. Serenata Morisca
80. Tango No. 2
81. Tarantella (Recuerdos de Nápoles)
82. Tua Imagem
83. Una Limosna por el Amor de Dios
84. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Souvenir d'un Réve)
85. Vals de Primavera
86. Vals Op. 8, No. 3
87. Vals Op. 8, No. 4
88. Variaciones sobre un Tema de Tárrega
89. Variaciones sobre El Punto Guanacasteco
90. Vidalita con Variaciones
91. Villancico
92. Zapateado Caribe (for 3 guitars)

### **Second Guitar Parts:**

92. Allemande (Bach)
93. Minuet (Bach)
94. Coste Estudio Op. 38, No. 22
95. Danza Castellana (Moreno Torroba)
96. Estudio (Aguado)
97. Estudio (Aguado)
98. Lección (Aguado)
99. Lección (Aguado)
99. Lección No. 3 (Parras de Moral)
100. Lección No. 6 (Parras de Moral)

### **ORIGINAL WORKS NOT IN MANUSCRIPT**

1. Adieu
2. Aire Brasileiro
3. Aires Andaluces
4. Aires Criollos (Aires Sudamericanos, Aires Americanos)



5. Allegro Brillante
6. Arrullo
7. Bicho Feo
8. Barcarola de los Recuerdos
9. Cajita de Música
10. Canzoneta
11. Concerto en Fa
12. Chora Cavaquinho
13. Diana Guaraní
14. Danza Macabra
15. El Arroyo
16. El Carrousell
17. El Hijo Pródigo
18. Estudio (a)
19. Fiesta de la Luna Nueva (Invocación a la Luna)
20. Flavito (choro)
21. Flores Murchas
22. Gloria e Amor
23. Gran Jota
24. Gran Marcha Heróica
25. Habanera
26. La Bananita
27. La Calesita
28. Lalita
29. Loreley
30. Minuet (D)
31. Pantheismo
32. Poema de América
33. Pot-Pourri Lírico
34. Rapsodia Española
35. Rapsodia Latinoamericana
36. Recuerdos del Pacífico
37. Salteñita
38. Saudades do Rio de Janeiro
39. Trémolo Estudio
40. Triste
41. Untitled Romanza in D
42. Vals No. 2
43. Zapateado Caribe (solo guitar)



## TRANSCRIPTIONS NOT IN MANUSCRIPT:

### EUROPEAN MUSIC

1. Air de Ballet (Ferranti)
2. Allemande (Bach)
3. Andante (Haydn)
4. Asturias (Albéniz)
5. Berceuse (Schumann)
6. Bouree (Bach)
7. Cádiz (Albéniz)
8. Cantos de España (Albéniz)
9. Chanson du Printemps  
(Mendelssohn)
10. Chant du Paysan (Grieg)
11. Chorale (Haendel)
12. Courante (Bach)
13. Dance of the Hours (Ponchielli)
14. Danza Española No. 5  
(Granados)
15. Danza Española No. 10  
(Granados)
16. Duo de los Paraguas (Chueco)
17. Elegie (Massenet)
18. Fantasía Morisca (Espinoza)
19. Gavotte in Rondo (Bach)
20. Granada (Albéniz)
21. Il Trovatore (Verdi)
22. Lucia de Lamermoor-aria final  
(Donizetti)
23. Mazurka (Chopin)
24. Melody in F (Rubenstein)
25. Minuet (Bufaleti)
26. Minuet (Paderewsky)
27. Momento Musical (Schumann)
28. Moraima (Espinoza)
29. Nocturne Op. 9, No. 2 (Chopin)
30. Novellette (Schumann)
31. Oro y Plata Vals (Lehar)
33. Prelude (Schumann)
34. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)
35. Prelude No. 4 (Chopin)

### LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC

1. Aire Nacional (Ciervas)
2. Alma Llanera (Gutierrez)
3. Brazilian National Anthem
4. Campamento Cerro León
5. Cerro Corá
6. Chopi
7. Colorado
8. Divagación (P. Morales Pino)
9. El Duelo de la Patria (Chavez)
10. El Guatecano (Murillo)
11. El Poema del Rancho (Murillo)
12. El Trapiche (Murillo)
13. Guyrá Campana
14. Intermezzo No. 1 (Calvo)
15. Iris (Pino)
16. Katie and Jessie-duo  
(Pellegrini)
17. La Paloma (Yradier)
18. Luar do Sertao (Cearense)
19. Mamá Kumandá
20. Marcha Paraguaya (Dupuy)
21. Marcha Paraguaya (Pinho)
22. Nderesá porá
23. Neike los Cuña
24. Paraguayan National Anthem
25. Pericón "Por María" (Podestá)
26. Rojhechaga-ú
27. Romanza (Napoleao)
28. Salvadorean National Anthem
29. San Lorenzo March (Silva)



36. Prelude No. 7 (Chopin)
37. Prelude No. 20 (Chopin)
38. Preludio Español (Albéniz)
39. Romanza Op. 38, No. 3 (Mendelssohn)
40. Sad Song (Tchaikowsky)
41. Sarabande (Bach)
42. Serenata Española (Malats)
43. Serenata (Toselli)
44. Sevilla (Albéniz)
45. Skater's Waltz (Waldteufel)
46. Torre Bermeja (Albéniz)
47. Tres Jolie (Waldteufel)
48. Waltz No. 3, Op. 34, No.2 (Chopin)
49. Waltz No. 7, Op. 64, No.2 (Chopin)

## **WORKS FOR GUITAR BY OTHER COMPOSERS:**

1. Al Fin Solos-duo (García Tolsa)
2. Allegro al Antico (Sor)
3. Allegro Brillante (Sor)
4. Andante Largo (Sor)
5. Andante No. 8-duo (Cano)
6. Andante (Coste)
7. Andantino (Sor)
8. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)
9. Cielito Porteño-duo (Sosa Escalada)
10. Concerto en La Menor (Arcas)
11. Cuento de Amor (Manjón)
12. Danza Castellana (Moreno Torroba)
13. Danza Mora (Tárrega)
14. El Delirio (Arcas)
15. Estudio en Si Bemol, Op. 29, No. 1 (Sor)
16. Estudio Expresivo para Portamento (Manjón)
17. Estudio No. 8 (Aguado)
18. Estudio Op. 38, No. 8-scherzando (Coste)
19. Estudio Op. 38, No. 22-allegro moderato (Coste)
20. Fandanguillo (Turina)
21. Fantasía Capricho (Giuliani)
22. Fantasía en Mi (Viñas)
23. Fantasía en Imitación al Piano (Viñas)
24. Fantasía sobre La Traviata (Arcas)
25. Fantasía Variée (Sor)
26. Fuente Morisca (Borges)



27. Gavota (Tárrega)
28. La Visita (García Tolsa)
29. Madrigal-Gavota (Sosa Escalada)
30. Marcha Heróica (Giuliani)
31. Matilde (García Tolsa)
32. Mazurka en Sol (Llobet)
33. Mazurka (García Tolsa)
34. Mazurka (Tárrega)
35. Meditación (García Tolsa)
36. Minuet in A (Sor)
37. Minuet in C (Sor)
38. Minuet (Tárrega)
39. Momento Musical (Schubert)
40. Polaca Fantástica (Arcas)
41. Polo y Soleá (Parga)
42. Preludio No. 5 (Tárrega)
43. Rapsodia Española (Parga)
44. Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)
45. Rondo Brillante (Aguado)
46. Serenata Española (Parga)
47. Sonatina (Moreno Torroba)
48. Sonatina (Tárrega)
49. Variations on a Theme by Mozart (Sor)

## **WORKS TRANSCRIBED FOR VIOLIN AND GUITAR (with Eduardo Fabini)**

1. Serenata (Drila)
2. Siciliana and Rigodón (Francoeur)
3. Danza Española No. 5 (Granados)
4. Canto de Amor (Kreisler)
5. Vals (Kreisler)
6. Carnival of Venice (Paganini)
7. El Cisne (Saint Saens)
8. Zapateado (Sarasate)
9. Mazurka (Segura)



Estudio n.º 7.

N. Goste.

[illegible]

*Digilada por YOHAN para su querido amigo y discípulo Vito Zelandi.*

*S. José. (C. Rica) 3-7-39.*

An example of Barrios' calligraphic skills, this study by Napoleon Coste was written out and fingered January 3, 1939 in San José, Costa Rica for Walter Bolandi.



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*The Port of Spain Gazette*, Port-of-Spain, January 14, 19, 1932; February 2, 1932

*Trinidad Guardian*, Port-of-Spain, January 14, 21, 1932

## **Chapter 5**

*El Mundo*, Havana, October 5, 1937

*Fantoches*, Caracas, February 28, 1936

*Haiti-Journal*, Port-au-Prince, July 19, 1937

*La Esfera*, Caracas, March 2, 1936

## **INTERVIEWS:**

Amadeo Báez Allende (Asunción)

Lalyta Almirón (Rosario, Argentina)

Cortés Andrino (San Salvador)

René Andrino (San Salvador)

Dinora Bolandi (San José, Costa Rica)

Francisco Bracamonte (San José)

Leo Brouwer (Santa Cruz)

Raúl Cabezas (San José)

Antonio Carballo (San Salvador)

Agustín Carlevaro (Montevideo)

Alirio Díaz (Toronto)



Pedro Duval (Porto Alegre)  
Sila Godoy (Asunción)  
Edgar Pinto Hernandez (San José)  
Alvaro Herrera (San José)  
Antonio Lauro (Caracas)  
Julia Martinez de Rodriguez (Costa Rica)  
José Cándido Morales (El Salvador)  
Zuni Salomoni (Asunción)  
Juan de Dios Trejos (Cartago)  
John Williams (Caracas)



# FOOTNOTES

## CHAPTER 1: YOUTH IN PARAGUAY

<sup>1</sup> Humaitá is located in southern Paraguay in the District of Neembucú about 40 kilometers north of Corrientes on the northern side of the Paraná River, which forms the international boundary with Argentina.

<sup>2</sup> Numerous authors claim that in the Barrios family there were only five children, but in fact there were seven sons. Carlos Bordas, who authored a series of articles published in the Asunción newspaper *Patria* in 1955-56, clearly describes all seven brothers. Further corroboration comes from the grandson of second eldest brother Hector, Manuel Barrios Paniagua (b. 1940) of Asunción, who confirmed that he remembers his relatives speaking of "los siete hermanos locos" ("the seven crazy brothers").

<sup>3</sup> Rómulo played the harp, Hector the violin, Virgilio the flute, and José, Agustín and Diodoro played guitars.

<sup>4</sup> Gustavo Sosa Escalada composed the following pieces for guitar:

- 1) Recuerdos del Infierno
- 2) Don Dios Nos Libre
- 3) A la Gloria
- 4) Estudio Arpegiado en Fa
- 5) Cielito Porteño (duo)
- 6) Zaida Mercedes-gavotte
- 7) María-habanera
- 8) Totón
- 9) Florencia (duo)
- 10) Nydia-marcha
- 11) Estudio Diabólico
- 12) Madrigal-gavotte

<sup>5</sup> Sosa Escalada gave Barrios lessons in San Juan Bautista in 1898-99, and in 1900 at the house of his brothers Hector and Virgilio in Asunción.

<sup>6</sup> Municipal Archives of San Juan Bautista, Book I, folio 65: Property Titles. Doroteo Barrios held title number 47.

<sup>7</sup> The Paraguayan National Library has only four months of issues for the newspaper *Los Sucesos*, which commenced publication on August 16, 1905. All issues were consulted but no articles were found crediting Agustín Barrios as author.

<sup>8</sup> Nicolino Pellegrini was (according to Boettner) "one of the few who succeeded in sounding the soul of Paraguayan music extracting it from its folkloric roots". Paraguay gained a great deal when this son of Italy arrived



in 1893, and it can be said that he was perhaps the most important musical figure in Paraguay during the first few decades of the 20th century. He composed a great deal of music, including operas, chamber music, music for band, songs, etc. In 1912 he started the *Banda de la Policía*, which was the premiere musical ensemble of its day.

<sup>9</sup> Bordas claims that Barrios, with friends Dionisio Basualdo and Fernando Muñoz, enrolled in the Instituto Paraguayo after “abandoning the Colegio Nacional” – some time after 1902. Years later, describing his youthful experiences with music, Barrios stated that he studied “the cello a little and the violin” (*Diario Comercial*, August 29, 1933, San Pedro Sula, Nicaragua). These were Pellegrini’s chosen instruments and he undoubtedly taught young Agustín the rudiments of string technique.

<sup>10</sup> See page 247 for the original program from this concert of January 4, 1908.

<sup>11</sup> Among the many books that Viriato Diaz Perez wrote figure *India* (Madrid 1895), *Some Facts on Ancient Hindu Literature* (Prague 1898) and *On Islamic Mysticism* (Madrid 1903).

## CHAPTER 2: THE ARTIST MATURES

<sup>1</sup> Bordas claims that in 1922 Barrios declared that “in Brazil I spent two years under the protection of a benefactor” and this support was “what I needed to move forward in my art.”

<sup>2</sup> Trejos claims that Barrios told him that he had seen Miguel Llobet “many times in Buenos Aires”. Llobet first visited Argentina in 1910 and paid several more visits to the Rio de la Plata in 1918, 1922, 1925 and 1929. A quote attributed to Llobet was given on the program Barrios gave in Sao Paulo, October 18, 1929: “To Agustín Barrios, with vivid cordiality and frank admiration, not forgetting ever the delicious moments caused by your exquisite art.” I believe that Llobet made these remarks after hearing Barrios in 1929 in Buenos Aires.

<sup>3</sup> A number of writers state that Barrios visited Peru but no corroboration of this has yet been found. If he did visit Peru, it most likely occurred as part of this initial trip to Chile.

<sup>4</sup> This writer visited Aida Borda y Pagola in Maldonado, Uruguay but was unable to spend any time with her or obtain any copies of said manuscripts.

<sup>5</sup> Godoy saw this copy of Hugo Riemann’s text (in Uruguay) with notes written in the margins by Barrios. Karl Wilhelm Julius Hugo Riemann (1849-1919) was a professor of music at the University of Leipzig and was “one of the most diligent and prolific musicologists and theorists of his time.” His *Musical Lexicon* was published in 1882.

<sup>6</sup> Ronoel Simoes of Sao Paulo states that he communicated with Luis Durañona, Barrios’ secretary for many of the “early years” in Uruguay, and that Durañona verified that Barrios began recording in 1913 in Montevideo.



# Teatro Nacional

HOY Sábado 4 de Enero de 1908 HOY

## Gran Concierto vocal é instrumental

Organizado por el Maestro Nicolino Pellegrini

EN FESTEJO DEL AÑO NUEVO

DEDICADO

al Exmo. Señor Presidente de la República,  
á los Poderes Públicos y á la culta Sociedad Asuncena.

### PROGRAMA

#### I PARTE

Orquesta. Marcha **Independencia**, del Maestro L. Tessada; dedicada al pueblo Paraguayo y dirigida por el Maestro N. Pellegrini.

- Chiara. 1 **Nanninella**, Canzoneta napolitana en carácter cantada por la niña Feliceta Salvi con acompañamiento de Orquesta.  
Ritter. 2 **Bolero Brillante**, para Violín y Piano; ejecutado por la Señorita Elvira Guanes y la Señora Angela G. de Fernandez.  
L. Cavedagni. 3 **Il canto d' un Italiano nell' estero**, composición estilo Griego-antiguo (anácreónico) declamado y cantado por el autor, con acompañamiento de Orquesta.  
Hauser. 4 **Rapsodia**, para Violín y Piano; ejecutada por el Maestro N. Pellegrini y la Sta. Katie Stewart.

#### II PARTE

Orquesta. **La Paraguaya**, Tango (Habanera) del Maestro N. Pellegrini; dedicada á la distinguida Señora VENANCIA TRIAN DE STEWART. (estreno)

- Thomé. 1 **Mandolinade**, (Serenata Española) para Mandolines y Piano; ejecutada por las Señoritas Emilia Brun, Catalina y Margarita Stewart y la Profesora Señora Renée Cler.  
Artot. 2 **Fantasia**, sobre motivos de Óperas del célebre compositor BELLINI para Violín y Piano; ejecutada por los Señores Nicolás Angulo (hijo) y Millán Samaniego.  
Tosti. 3 **Malia**, Romanza cantada por la Sta. Marta Guanes Machain con acompañamiento de Orquesta.  
Chopin. 4 **Polonesa**, ejecutada por la Profesora de Piano, Señorita Chechina Salvi.  
D'Annunzio. 5 **La figlia di Yorio**, Canzoneta cantada en carácter por la niña Feliceta Salvi con acompañamiento de Orquesta.  
Leonard. 6 **Souvenir de Hayden**, para Violín y Piano, ejecutado por el Maestro N. Pellegrini y la Profesora Señora Renée Cler.

#### III PARTE

Orquesta. Marcha **Foot-Ball "Guaraní"** del Maestro N. Pellegrini, dedicado al Club del mismo nombre. (estreno)

- Moszkowski. ) 1 2ª Rapsodia Hungara | ejecutados por el Sr. Mario Piccardo con el famoso pianista Angelus  
Lisz. ) 1 Waltz op. 34 | de la casa EL IRIS.  
Donizetti. 2 **Lucia de Lammermoor**, Cavatina (*Regnava nel silenzio*) cantada por la Señorita Isabel Bibolini, con acompañamiento de Orquesta.  
Gotschalk. 3 **Fantasia**, para Piano, sobre el motivo del Himno Brasileiro; ejecutada por la Señora Angela Guanes de Fernandez.  
A. Barrios. 4 **Fantasia**, para Guitarra, ejecutada por el autor.  
Gambardella. 5 **De vace**, Tarantella napolitana, cantada en carácter por la niña Feliceta Salvi con acompañamiento de Orquesta.  
Sarazate. 6 **Célebre Tango**, para Violín y Piano; ejecutado por el Maestro N. Pellegrini y la Señora Katie Stewart, (en obsequio al distinguido público asunceno).

#### Precios de las localidades:

Palcos balcón . . . . .	\$ 100.00	Sillas de preferencia . . . . .	\$ 12.00
" platea . . . . .	60.00	Platea con entrada . . . . .	10.00
" altos . . . . .	40.00	Entrada general . . . . .	5.00
Entrada á Paraiso . . . . .		\$ 3.00	

Nota.— El piano marca Mors & Cía. que actuará en el Concierto es facilitado gentilmente por la casa "El Iris" que es única importadora.

Á LAS 8 3/4 P. M.



<sup>7</sup> The Costa Rican daily *La Hora* on April 13, 1934 reported Barrios' death in Mexico. The *Diario da Noite* in Rio de Janeiro reported his death (in Venezuela) on December 12, 1934. Baez claims that his death was also reported in Panama in 1929.

### CHAPTER 3: THE JOURNEY TO GREATNESS

<sup>1</sup> By 1920 Miguel Lobet, Andrés Segovia, Regino Sáinz de la Maza, Emilio Pujol and Josefina Robledo had all visited the Rio de la Plata.

<sup>2</sup> Francisco Bracamonte, a student and friend of Barrios in San Salvador, affirmed this in a conversation in San José, Costa Rica, February 1991. Barrios acknowledged that Segovia was an outstanding technician but he did not see himself as being in any way "less of a technician" than Segovia. Barrios' great pride was in his identity as a composer which, though necessarily requiring a complete dominion of playing techniques, involved skills and talents quite beyond the "mere" acquirement of physical virtuosity.

<sup>3</sup> This writer heard Andrés Segovia publicly declare in 1982 that "Barrios was not a good composer for the guitar."

<sup>4</sup> *El Diario*, August 25, 1922, Asunción, states that Barrios was heard in Santiago, Chile by "President Arturo Alessandri", who held office from June 1920 until September 1924. Analyzing Barrios' movements during those years would indicate the early part of 1922 as the time he paid his second visit to Chile.

<sup>5</sup> Godoy learned this from Sosa Escalada.

<sup>6</sup> Baptiste Almirón was the guitar instructor of Hector Roberto Chavero (b. 1908), better known professionally as Atahualpa Yupanqui.

<sup>7</sup> This recording of *Contemplación* was a non-commercial, privately financed enterprise and the disc is today in the collection of Ronoel Simoes of Sao Paulo.

<sup>8</sup> This taped performance unfortunately lacks a few measures just before the return to the coda due to the fact that the audio cassette tape upon which it was recorded comes to the end of side one just at that particular place in the piece. Other than these few measures, the piece is complete and quite notable, being a romanza in D with a melodic bass.

<sup>9</sup> The extended poem written for Isabel (see page 188) carries this date.

<sup>10</sup> Odeon Industries in Buenos Aires has thus far only located information regarding Barrios' recording sessions from the years 1928-29. He did numerous titles before this, commencing in 1921. About 1925 a newer "electric recording" technology was introduced worldwide (as opposed to the older acoustic technology), and it is quite probable that many recordings were redone. The fact that the majority of the Odeon discs located are from



the years 1928-29 would suggest that Barrios had re-recorded much of his repertoire to take advantage of continued improvements in recording technology that occurred in the late 1920's.

<sup>11</sup> Barrios published eight works with Casa Romero Fernandez in Buenos Aires in 1929: *Madrigal* (gavota), *Luz Mala* (estilo), *País de Abanicos* (mazurka), *Preludio Op. 5, No. 1*, *Vals Op. 8, No. 4*, *Minueto en Si Mayor*, *Humoresque* and *Estudio de Concierto*. In the 1930's Casa Romero Fernandez sold out to Antigua Casa Nunez, which continued to offer the eight selections. Antigua Casa Nunez sold the rights to Ricordi in the 1950's, which dropped six of the pieces, retaining *Vals No. 4* and *Preludio*.

<sup>12</sup> Godoy is of the opinion that Barrios met Gloria in Rio during carnival of 1930. Perez quotes Tomás R. Salomoni's assertion that Barrios told him that he and Gloria met and were married in Pelotas.

## CHAPTER 4: CACIQUE NITSUGA MANGORE

<sup>1</sup> By an unidentified party, these notes are a summation of Barrios' visit to Recife and are in the collection of Ronoel Simoes of Sao Paulo.

<sup>2</sup> Barrios played benefit concerts for the Venezuelan Red Cross, for victims of a hurricane in Bogotá, for Rosales Hospital in El Salvador and for the Student Federation in Caracas.

<sup>3</sup> Venezuelan guitarist/composer Rodrigo Riera (b. 1923) was working as a shoeshine boy in 1932 in Carora where he gave Barrios a shoeshine!

<sup>4</sup> These dates are found in one of several albums Barrios made and carried with him during these years. This particular album is today in the Guzmán Museum in San Salvador.

<sup>5</sup> Program of November 29, 1932:

- First Part: 1. Allegro al Antico (Sor)  
2. Oración de la Tarde (Barrios)  
3. Set of Waltzes (García Tolsa)  
4. Polaca Fantástica (Arcas)

- Second Part: 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
2. Andante (Mozart)  
3. Novelleta (Schumann)  
4. Momento Musical (Schubert)

- Third Part: 1. Intermezzo No. 1 (Calvo)  
2. El Poema del Rancho (Murillo)  
3. Trémolo Estudio (Barrios)  
4. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)



Program of December 2, 1932:

- First Part: 1. Minuet in A (Sor)  
2. Reverie (García Tolsa)  
3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
4. Lucia de Lammermoor-aria final (Donizetti)
- Second Part: 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
2. Canzoneta (Mendelssohn)  
3. Fandanguillo (Turina)  
4. Alegría de España (Moreno Torroba)
- Third Part: 1. Serenata (Toselli)  
2. Canción Popular Paraguayo (Barrios)  
3. Bicho Feo (Barrios)  
4. El Delirio (Arcas)

Program of December 4, 1932, 6:15 PM:

- First Part: 1. Romanza (Napoleao)  
2. Scherzo (Coste)  
3. Vals Tropical (Barrios)  
4. Por María (Podestá)
- Second Part: 1. Danza Gitana (Granados)  
2. Melody in F (Rubenstein)  
3. Sevillanas (Albéniz)  
4. Fiesta de la Luna Nueva-escena guaraní (Barrios)
- Third Part: 1. Il Trovatore (Verdi)  
2. Duo de los Paraguas (Chueco)  
3. Divagación (P. Morales Pino)  
4. Minuet (Paderewsky)

Program of December 4, 1932, 9 PM:

- First Part: 1. Minuet in C (Sor)  
2. Madrigal (Barrios)  
3. Elegie (Massenet)  
4. Moraima (Espinosa)
- Second Part: 1. Gavotte (Bach)  
2. Adagio sostenuto-claro de luna (Beethoven)  
3. Serenata Española (Malats)  
4. Nocturne Op. 9, No. 2 (Chopin)



- Third Part: 1. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
2. Iris-pasillo (Pino)  
3. El Trapiche (Murillo)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

<sup>6</sup> These dates are from the above cited album in the Guzmán Museum in San Salvador.

<sup>7</sup> Program of April 20, 1933:

- First Part: 1. Fantasía Imitación al Piano (Viñas)  
2. Scherzo (Coste)  
3. Madrigal (Barrios)  
4. Zapateado (Barrios)
- Second Part: 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
2. Canzoneta (Mendelssohn)  
3. Mazurka (Chopin)  
4. Minuet (Paderewski)
- Third Part: 1. Leyenda de Asturias (Albéniz)  
2. Meditación (García Tolsa)  
3. Danza Paraguaya (Barrios)  
4. Potpourri Lírico (Barrios)

Program of April 22, 1933:

- First Part: 1. Minuet (Sor)  
2. Romanza (Napoleao)  
3. Mazurka Apasionada (Barrios)  
4. Fiesta de la Luna Nueva-escena guaraní (Barrios)
- Second Part:  
1. Adagio sostenuto-Clair de Lune (Beethoven)  
2. Andante (Mozart)  
3. Sad Song (Tchaikowsky)  
4. Waltz No. 7 (Chopin)
- Third Part: 1. Intermezzo No. 1 (Calvo)  
2. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
4. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Barrios)



Program of April 23, 1933:

- First Part: 1. Minuet in A (Sor)  
2. Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello (Barrios)  
3. Skater's Waltz (Waldteufel)  
4. Pericón-danza típica argentina (Podestá)
- Second Part: 1. Song of Spring (Mendelssohn)  
2. Musical Moment (Schubert)  
3. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
4. Moraima (Espinosa)
- Third Part: 1. Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)  
2. El Guatecano-aire indígena colombiano (Murillo)  
3. El Sueño de la Muñequita (Barrios)  
4. Tarantela (Barrios)

Program of May 1, 1933:

- First Part: 1. Fantasía Imitación al Piano (Viñas)  
2. Cueca (Barrios)  
3. Skater's Waltz (Waldteufel)  
4. Capricho Español (Barrios)
- Second Part: 1. Courante (Bach)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
4. Nocturne in Eb (Chopin)
- Third Part: 1. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
2. Zapateado (Barrios)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

Program of May 3, 1933:

- First Part: 1. Serenata Morisca (Barrios)  
2. La Catedral (Barrios)  
Andante Religioso  
Allegro Solemne
- Second Part: 1. Intermezzo No. 1 (Calvo)  
2. Leyenda de Asturias (Albéniz)  
3. Moraima (Espinosa)  
4. Minuet (Paderewsky)



- Third Part: 1. Il Trovatore (Verdi)  
 2. Danza Paraguaya (Barrios)  
 3. Bicho Feo (Barrios)  
 4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

<sup>9</sup> Programs encountered in El Salvador. Barrios offered two concerts on July 2, 1933:

*Concert at 6 PM:*

- First Part: 1. Minuet in A (Sor)  
 2. Romanza en Imitación al Violoncello (Barrios)  
 3. Skater's Waltz (Waldteufel)  
 4. Song of Spring (Mendelssohn)  
 5. Moraima (Espinosa)

- Second Part: 1. Sevilla (Albéniz)  
 2. Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega)  
 3. El Guatecano (Murillo)  
 4. El Sueño de la Muñequita (Barrios)  
 5. Recuerdos de Nápoles-Tarantela (Barrios)

*Concert at 9 PM:*

- First Part: 1. Fantasía Imitación al Piano (Viñas)  
 2. Scherzo (Coste)  
 3. Madrigal (Barrios)  
 4. Zapateado (Barrios)

- Second Part: 1. Traumerei (Schumann)  
 2. Canzoneta (Mendelssohn)  
 3. Mazurka (Chopin)  
 4. Minuet (Paderewsky)

- Third Part: 1. Leyenda de Asturias (Albéniz)  
 2. Meditación (García Tolsa)  
 3. Danza Paraguaya (Barrios)  
 4. Potpourri Lírico (Barrios)

<sup>10</sup> Program of September 9, 1933:

- First Part: 1. Allegro al Antico (Sor)  
 2. Romanza (Napoleao)  
 3. Vals No. 3 (Barrios)  
 4. Rapsodia Española (Barrios)



- Second Part: 1. Song of Spring (Mendelssohn)  
 2. Minuet (Paderewsky)  
 3. La Catedral (Barrios)  
     Andante Religioso  
     Allegro Solemne  
 4. Fiesta de la Luna Nueva-escena guaraní (Barrios)

- Third Part: 1. Serenata Española (Malats)  
 2. Aire Indígena (Murillo)  
 3. Trémolo Estudio (Barrios)  
 4. Gran Jota-variaciones (Barrios)

Program of September 10, 1933:

- First Part: 1. Fantasía en Mi (Viñas)  
 2. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
 3. Skater's Waltz (Waldteufel)  
 4. Tarantela (Barrios)

- Second Part: 1. Prelude and Fugue (Bach)  
 2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
 3. Prelude (Schumann)  
 4. Gran Fantasía (Viñas)

- Third Part: 1. Fandanguillo (Turina)  
 2. Gavota Romántica (Czibulka)  
 3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
 4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

<sup>11</sup> Boettner gives this unusual program for a concert Barrios gave in Mexico in 1934:

- First Part: 1. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
 2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
 3. Nocturne (Chopin)  
 4. Leyenda (Albéniz)  
 5. Sevilla (Albéniz)

- Second Part: 1. Intermezzo (Calvo)  
 2. El Guatecano (Murillo)  
 3. Aire Popular Paraguayo (Barrios)  
 4. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
 5. Diana Guaraní

Obviously the idea with this concert was European music in the first half and Latin American music in the second.



<sup>12</sup> Prado, p. 109. This author states that he has in his possession a post card sent to Barrios by Stravinsky, with a message written in French: "I wish you a happy and good new year; much money and success, seven sons, and very thankful for your interest in things Russian attested by your melodious music." Igor Stravinsky

<sup>13</sup> Godoy claims that Barrios and Salomoni visited Paris and this was verified by Luisa Lebrón de Salomoni.

<sup>14</sup> In one of the three aforementioned memorabilia albums Barrios collected and put together during certain years of his travels (1930-39) there is an entry in his handwriting dated December 24, 1935, Madrid.

<sup>15</sup> Godoy has spoken with eyewitnesses in Spain who verified this fact.

## CHAPTER 5: THE LAST YEARS

<sup>1</sup> These dates are from the album Barrios made of his press clippings in Venezuela and Colombia in 1932 and 1936 which is in the possession of Bacon Duarte Prado of Asunción.

<sup>2</sup> Alirio Diaz states that Raúl Borges had two original manuscripts that Barrios wrote for him: *Danza Paraguaya* and *Medallón Antiguo*.

<sup>3</sup> This photo is from the collection of Jacinto Mateaiuda in Asunción.

<sup>4</sup> Program of July 26, 1939:

- First Part: 1. Gavota (Barrios)  
2. Barcarola (Barrios)  
3. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
4. Estudio Brillante (Coste)

- Second Part: 1. Andante (Mozart)  
2. Minuet (Beethoven)  
3. a) Prelude No. 20 (Chopin)  
b) Waltz No. 7 (Chopin)

- Third Part: 1. Meditación (García Tolsa)  
2. Torre Bermeja (Albéniz)  
3. Aire de Quena (Barrios)  
4. Zapateado Caribe (Barrios)

Program of July 27, 1939:

- First Part: 1. Fantasía Capricho (Giuliani)  
2. a) Prelude No. 5 (Tárrega)  
b) Study in A Major (Tárrega)  
3. Granada (Albéniz)  
4. Serenata Española (Malats)



- Second Part: 1. Gavotte en Rondó (Bach)  
2. Andante (Haydn)  
3. Mozart Variations (Sor)  
4. Minuet (Paderewski)

- Third Part: 1. Triste-aire argentino (Barrios)  
2. Danza Paraguaya (Barrios)  
3. Un Sueño en la Floresta (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

Program of August 13, 1939:

- First Part: 1. Andantino (Sor)  
2. Minuet in C (Sor)  
3. Estudio No. 22 (Coste)  
4. Meditación (García Tolsa)

- Second Part: 1. Fandanguillo (Turina)  
2. Sonatina (Moreno Torroba)  
a) Allegretto  
b) Andante  
c) Allegro

- Third Part: 1. Pericón "Por María" (Podestá)  
2. Alma Llanera (Guitierrez)  
3. El Guatecano (Murillo)  
4. El Delirio (Arcas)

Program of August 18, 1939:

- First Part: 1. Madrigal Gavota (Barrios)  
2. Vals Romántico (Barrios)  
3. Aconquija-aire de quena (Barrios)  
4. Recuerdos de Andalucía-capricho (Barrios)

- Second Part: 1. Loure (Bach)  
2. Claro de Luna-adagio (Beethoven)  
3. Romanza Op. 38, No. 3 (Mendelssohn)  
4. a) Waltz No. 3 (Chopin)  
b) Nocturne in Eb (Chopin)

- Third Part: 1. Danza Española No. 10 (Granados)  
2. Preludio Español (Albéniz)  
3. Contemplación (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)



Program of August 20, 1939:

- First Part: 1. Fanstasia Imitación al Piano (Viñas)  
2. Study in A (Coste)  
3. Capricho Arabe (Tárrega)  
4. Skater's Waltz (Waldteufel)

- Second Part: 1. Madrigal Gavota (Barrios)  
2. Meditación (García Tolsa)  
3. Serenata Española (Malats)  
4. Gran Jota Aragonesa (Tárrega-Barrios)

- Third Part: 1. Pericón "Por María" (Podestá)  
2. Alma Llanera (Gutierrez)  
3. Aire Popular Paraguayo (Barrios)  
4. Diana Guaraní (Barrios)

<sup>5</sup> Trejos observed that this was more than a request— it was a mandate!

<sup>6</sup> Alirio Diaz, a resident of Rome, stated that he once attempted to locate Gloria in Italy but turned up nothing.

<sup>7</sup> Godoy claims that Segovia expressed this opinion at that time to a group of students at Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

<sup>8</sup> Trejos claims that Barrios' chest was extremely swollen and distended during his last months.

## CHAPTER 8: BARRIOS THE COMPOSER

<sup>1</sup> The examples given in this chapter are not a comprehensive analysis of Barrios' music (which would include greater parameters than are possible here). A profound study of his style would easily be the subject of another treatise.

The harmonic analysis given takes into account an occasional misspelling of a note by Barrios:

Example 1, fourth measure: The D should be spelled as a C double sharp (being the fifth of an F sharp augmented triad).

Example 2, fourth measure: The A flat should be spelled as a G sharp, being the root of a G sharp diminished chord (the vii of V in d minor).

Example 9, sixth measure, last half: the E sharp in the high voice should be written as F natural as it is a flatted ninth to an E dominant seventh harmony which functions as a V/V in D major.



<sup>2</sup> Nine new titles have been published by Querico Publications, 1295 Shaw Avenue Suite 104, Clovis, CA 93612 USA:

1. Variations on a Theme of Tárrega
2. Punto Guanacasteco Variations
3. Zapateado Caribe (guitar trio)
4. Fabiniana
5. Abrí la Puerta Mí China
6. Sargento Cabral (zamba)
7. Altair (waltz)
8. Capricho Arabe of Tárrega arr. by Barrios
9. Prelude Op. 28, No. 4 (Chopin) transcribed by Barrios

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the manuscript version from Uruguay, Barrios also wrote out this piece in Sao Paulo in 1929 in memory of a good friend's son who had died tragically and it was this version that Hugo Carboni published in a privately financed edition in Sao Paulo (date unknown). This version was included in the DiGiorgio collection and is the one given in the major anthologies of Barrios that have appeared since the late 1970's: The DiGiorgio collection was the largest published source of Barrios' music for its time, comprising 23 selections. Unfortunately it was done posthumously and contains many typographical errors.

Comparing these two versions, minor differences in the left hand fingerings are observed (such as the use of the cross-barre) and there is a major difference in the harmony at measure 26: the F sharp in the high voice in the DiGiorgio version is F natural in the Uruguayan manuscript version, making the chord an F dominant seventh instead of an F sharp diminished seventh. Neither harmony is "more correct" than the other—in g minor, F sharp diminished seven is a vii7/i function and F dominant seven is a V7/III function—indicating that Barrios had two distinct ideas:

Uruguayan ms:	DiGiorgio:
	

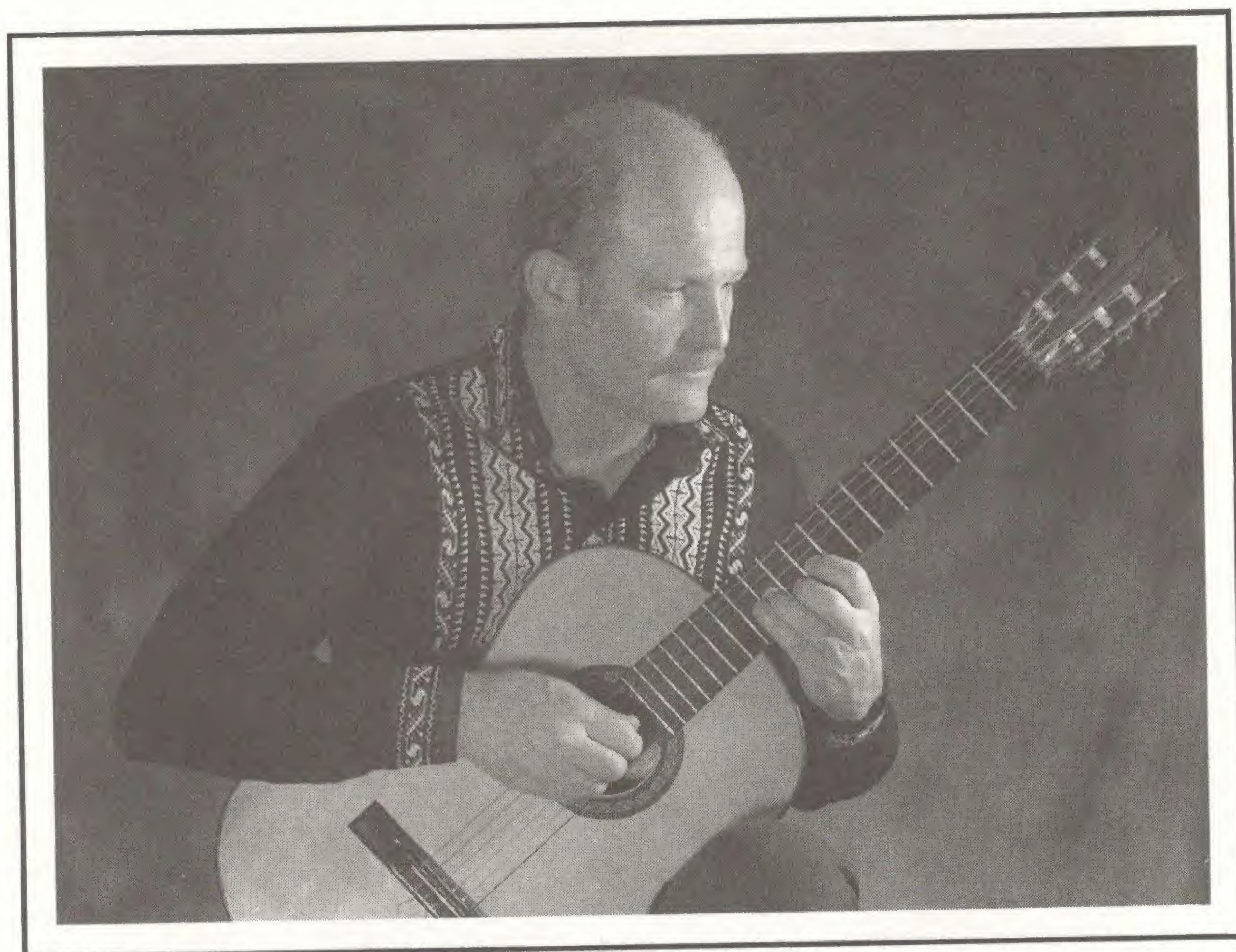




Sila Godoy (b. 1921), Paraguayan concert guitarist and composer, “met” Barrios when he was two years old in Villa Rica in 1923. Godoy first discovered Barrios’ music in 1941 when Dionisio Basualdo played for him the Odeon recording of *Danza Paraguaya*. In 1944 he moved to Buenos Aires where he resided approximately ten years during which time his interest in Barrios continued to grow as he met numerous people on both sides of the Rio de la Plata, such as Mario Villar Sáenz Valiente and Martín Borda y Pagola, who had vivid memories, musical manuscripts, phonograph recordings and photographs, etc. — all relating to Barrios who had touched their lives in a powerful and unique way. In 1954 Godoy expanded his investigative journey to Central America and has returned many times since.

Through his travels Godoy has amassed a significant collection of materials surrounding the life and music of Barrios. Many works by Barrios would not have been found were it not for his efforts. Sila Godoy’s contributions to the preservation and survival of the music of Barrios are noteworthy and I am the first to express my personal appreciation for all the materials, photographs and music that he unselfishly made available for my research.





Richard Dwight "Rico" Stover (b. 1945) first heard of Barrios when he was an exchange student in 1962 to Costa Rica. There he met Juan de Dios Trejos and began study of the guitar. After completing high school in Fresno, California, Stover attended California State University at Fresno as well as the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at the University of Madrid. He then performed for several years throughout California and Nevada before returning to the University of California at Santa Cruz where he completed a Bachelor of Arts in an interdisciplinary major, Latin American Ethnomusicology (1975).

In 1976 he published *The Guitar Works of Agustín Barrios Mangoré* (Belwin Mills) in four volumes. In 1980 he cofounded El Maestro Records and released the original recordings of Barrios on three long play discs which included a 14 page biographical booklet.

Stover has travelled widely in Iberoamerica and has lived in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Paraguay and Spain. He is an accomplished guitarist and singer. He resided in Hawaii for several years, performing on the Kohala Coast of the Big Island. The culmination of his long-standing research on Barrios occurred in 1990 when he was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to Paraguay.



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*zarzuelas*, 23

Zen, 83



# Preludio.

7201

*Handwritten signature*

-1- Lento:

Guitarra.

*Ben marcato il canto.*

C. 10

C. 9

C. 11



Handwritten musical score for guitar on a single staff. The score consists of four lines of music. The first line has measures with triplets and fingerings like (3), (4), and (1). The second line continues with similar patterns and includes a "C. 2" marking. The third line features more complex figures, including a "C. 2" marking and a "C. 7" marking. The fourth line includes a "C. 7" marking, a "C. 9" marking, and a "C. 7" marking, along with a "r. a. l. e. n. t." marking. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and fingerings.

En La Habana (Cuba), 28-I-38.



*Allegretto*

C. 4

$\frac{1}{2}$  C. 7

C. 7

$\frac{1}{2}$  C. 5

$\frac{1}{2}$  C. 5

$\frac{1}{2}$  C. 4

C. 4

$\frac{1}{2}$  C. 2

C. 7

ar.

I



Handwritten musical score for guitar, featuring a melody with various chords and fingerings. The score is written on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 2/4. The melody is composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, with many slurs and ties. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. Chords are indicated by letters C, G, and F, with numbers 1-4 indicating fingerings. The score is divided into several measures, with some measures containing multiple chords. The notation includes many slurs and ties, indicating a complex melodic line. The score is written in a clear, legible hand.

Chords and fingerings indicated in the score include:

- C.5 (first measure)
- C.5 (second measure)
- C.4 (third measure)
- C.9 (fourth measure)
- C.7 (fifth measure)
- C.6 (sixth measure)
- C.7 (seventh measure)

Tan José, (Costa Rica). III-38.



# Six Silver Moonbeams

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